اِنَّ هٰذَا الْقُرْاٰنَ يَهْدِيْ لِلَّتِيْ هِيَ اَقْوَمُ وَيُبَشِّرُ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ الَّذِيْنَ يَعْمَلُوْنَ الصّٰلِحٰتِ اَنَّ لَهُمْ اَجْرًا كَبِيْرًا

Quran English Translation and Tafseer
Sayyid Abul Ala Mawdudi

Surah At-Taubah (The Repentance)

سُوْرَةُ التَّوْبَةِ مَدَنِيَّةٌ

بَرَآءَةٌ مِّنَ اللّٰهِ وَ رَسُوْلِهٖۤ اِلَى الَّذِيْنَ عٰهَدْتُّمْ مِّنَ الْمُشْرِكِيْنَ

(9-1) This is a declaration of disavowal [1] by Allah and His Messenger to those who associate others with Allah in His Divinity and with whom you have made treaties: [2]

(1) As has already been stated in the preface to this Surah, this discourse (Ayats 1-37) was revealed in A.H.9, when Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him) had left for Makkah as leader of the pilgrims to the Kabah. Therefore the companions said to the Prophet (peace be upon him), “Send it to Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him), so that he may proclaim it on the occasion of Hajj.” He replied, “The importance and nature of the declaration demands that this should be proclaimed on my behalf by someone from my own family.” Accordingly, he entrusted this duty to Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) and instructed him to proclaim it openly before the pilgrims, and also make these four announcements: (1) No one who rejects Islam shall enter Paradise. (2) No mushrik should perform Hajj after this. (3) It is forbidden to move round the Kabah in a naked state. (4) The terms of the treaties which are still in force (i.e. with those who have not broken their treaties with the Messenger of Allah up to that time) would be faithfully observed till the expiry of the term of the treaties.

In this connection, it will be worthwhile to know that the first Hajj of the Islamic period after the conquest of Makkah was performed in A.H. 8 according to the old customs. Then in A.H. 9 the second Hajj was performed by the Muslims in the Islamic way, and by the mushriks in their own way. But the third Hajj, known as "Hajja-tul-Widaa", was performed in A.H. 10 in the purely Islamic way under the guidance of the Prophet (peace be upon him) himself. He did not perform Hajj during the two previous years because up to that time the mushriks had not been forbidden from it, and so there were still some traces of shirk associated with it.

Anfal: 58 regarding the treacherous people, for it is treachery from the Islamic point of view to wage war against any people with whom a treaty of peace had been made, without openly declaring that the treaty had been terminated. That is why a proclamation of the abrogation of the treaties was necessitated against those clans who were always hatching plots against Islam in spite of the treaties of peace they had made. They would break the treaties and turn hostile on the first opportunity for treachery, and the same was true of all the mushrik clans with the exception of Bani Kananah, Bani Damrah and one or two other clans.

This proclamation practically reduced the mushriks of Arabia to the position of outlaws and no place of shelter was left for them, for the major part of the country had come under the sway of Islam. As this released the Muslims from the obligations of the treaties made with them and forestalled them, they were driven into a tight corner. For, this smashed all their evil designs of creating trouble by inciting civil war at the time of a threat from the Roman and the Iranian Empires, or after the death of the Prophet (peace be upon him). But Allah and His Messenger (peace be upon him) turned the tables on them before the opportune moment for which they were waiting. Now the only alternatives left with them were either to accept Islam that had become the state religion of Arabia, or to fight against it and be exterminated, or to emigrate from the country.

The wisdom of this grand plan became apparent when the mischief of apostasy broke out in different parts of Arabia a year and a half after this at the death of the Prophet (peace be upon him). This disturbance was so sudden and violent that it shook to its foundations the newly created Islamic state and would have done a far greater harm if the organized power of shirk had not been broken beforehand by this abrogation. It may be asserted that, but for this timely action the mischief of apostasy, that rose at the very beginning of the caliphate of Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him), would have done tenfold harm by rebellion and civil war, and might have changed the whole history of Islam.

فَسِيحُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ أَرْبَعَةَ أَشْهُرٍ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّكُمْ غَيْرُ مُعْجِزِي اللَّهِ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ مُخْزِي الْكَافِرِينَ ٢

(9-2) "You may go about freely in the land, for four months, [3] but know well that you will not be able to frustrate Allah, and that Allah will bring disgrace upon those who deny the Truth."

(3) The respite of four months from the tenth of Zil-Haj (the date of the proclamation) to the tenth of Rabi-uththani was granted to give time to the mushriks so that they should consider their position carefully and decide whether to make preparation for war or to emigrate from the country or to accept Islam.

وَ اَذَانٌ مِّنَ اللّٰهِ وَ رَسُوۡلِهٖۤ اِلَى النَّاسِ يَوۡمَ الۡحَجِّ الۡاَكۡبَرِ اَنَّ اللّٰهَ بَرِىۡٓءٌ مِّنَ الۡمُشۡرِكِيۡنَ ۙ وَ رَسُوۡلُهٗ ؕ فَاِنۡ تُبۡتُمۡ فَهُوَ خَيۡرٌ لَّكُمۡ ۚ وَ اِنۡ تَوَلَّيۡتُمۡ فَاعۡلَمُوۡۤا اَنَّكُمۡ غَيۡرُ مُعۡجِزِى اللّٰهِ ؕ وَ بَشِّرِ الَّذِيۡنَ كَفَرُوۡا بِعَذَابٍ اَلِيۡمٍ ۙ﴿۳﴾

(9-3) This is a public proclamation by Allah and His Messenger to all people on the day of the Great Pilgrimage: (4) "Allah is free from all obligation to those who associate others with Allah in His Divinity; and so is His Messenger. If you repent, it shall be for your own good; but if you turn away, then know well that you will not be able to frustrate Allah. So give glad tidings of a painful chastisement to those who disbelieve.

(4) Hajj-i-akbar refers to the 10th of Zil-Hajjah and is also known as Yaum-un-Nahr. This has been explained by the Prophet (peace be upon him) in an authentic tradition. On the 10th of Zil-Hajjah, during the last Hajj of the Prophet (peace be upon him), he asked the people, “What is this day?” The people answered, “It is the day of sacrifice.”

The Prophet (peace be upon him) said, “This is the day of Hajj-i-akbar”. Here the word Hajj-i-akbar (greater pilgrimage) has been used in contrast to Hajj-i-asghar which the Arabs used for Umrah. Thus, the Hajj which is performed in the prescribed dates of Zil-Hajj is called Hajj-i-akbar.

اِلَّا الَّذِيۡنَ عٰهَدۡتُّمۡ مِّنَ الۡمُشۡرِكِيۡنَ ثُمَّ لَمۡ يَنۡقُصُوۡكُمۡ شَيۡـًٔا وَّ لَمۡ يُظَاهِرُوۡا عَلَيۡكُمۡ اَحَدًا فَاَتِمُّوۡۤا اِلَيۡهِمۡ عَهۡدَهُمۡ اِلٰى مُدَّتِهِمۡ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ يُحِبُّ الۡمُتَّقِيۡنَ ﴿۴﴾

(9-4) In exception to those who associate others with Allah in His Divinity are those with whom you have made treaties and who have not violated their treaties nor have backed up anyone against you. Fulfil your treaties with them till the end of their term. Surely Allah loves the pious." (5)

(5) “So, fulfill to them their treaty.” For your violation in such cases shall be against piety. And Muslims should remain pious under all circumstances “Indeed, Allah loves those who are righteous” only.

فَاِذَا انْسَلَخَ الْاَشْهُرُ الْحُرُمُ فَاقْتُلُوا الْمُشْرِكِيْنَ حَيْثُ وَجَدْتُّمُوْهُمْ وَخُذُوْهُمْ وَاحْصُرُوْهُمْ وَاقْعُدُوْا لَهُمْ كُلَّ مَرْصَدٍ ۚ فَاِنْ تَابُوْا وَاَقَامُوا الصَّلٰوةَ وَاٰتَوُا الزَّكٰوةَ فَخَلُّوْا سَبِيْلَهُمْ ۚ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ غَفُوْرٌ رَّحِيْمٌ ۝٥

(9-5) But when the sacred months expire [6] slay those who associate others with Allah in His Divinity wherever you find them; seize them, and besiege them, and lie in wait for them. But if they repent and establish the Prayer and pay Zakah, leave them alone. [7] Surely Allah is All-Forgiving, Ever-Merciful.

(6) Here “the sacred months” are not those four months during which war is forbidden for the sake of Hajj and Umrah but the four months that were made unlawful for the Muslims to attack those mushriks who were granted respite by Ayat 2.

(7) That is, “Mere repentance from disbelief and shirk will not end the matter. But they shall have to perform the prescribed prayer and pay Zakat dues. Without these it will not be considered that they had given up disbelief and embraced Islam." Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him) based his decision on this verse in the case of the apostates, after the death of the Prophet (peace be upon him), who argued that they were not rejecting Islam, because they offered Salat, even though they had refused to pay the Zakat dues. This argument roused doubts in the minds of the companions in general that they had no right to fight with such people as these. But Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him) removed their doubts, saying, “Verse 5 enjoins us to let those people go their way who fulfill all the three conditions, repentance from shirk, the establishment of Salat, and the payment of Zakat. We cannot forbear them, because they do not fulfill one of these three conditions.”

وَاِنْ اَحَدٌ مِّنَ الْمُشْرِكِيْنَ اسْتَجَارَكَ فَاَجِرْهُ حَتّٰى يَسْمَعَ كَلٰمَ اللّٰهِ ثُمَّ اَبْلِغْهُ مَاْمَنَهٗ ۭ ذٰلِكَ بِاَنَّهُمْ قَوْمٌ لَّا يَعْلَمُوْنَ ۝٦

(9-6) And if any of those who associate others with Allah in His Divinity seeks asylum, grant him asylum that he may hear the Word of Allah, and then escort him to safety for they are a people who do not know. [8]

(8) That is, if during a fight, an enemy makes a request that he should be given an opportunity to understand Islam, the Muslims should give him a surety of protection and allow him to visit them. They should then present Islam before him in order to make him understand it. If, after this, he does not embrace Islam, they should convey him safely to his place. Such a person who comes to Dar-ul-

Islam under the above mentioned protection is called mustamin in the Islamic code.

كَيۡفَ يَكُوۡنُ لِلۡمُشۡرِكِيۡنَ عَهۡدٌ عِنۡدَ اللّٰهِ وَعِنۡدَ رَسُوۡلِهٖۤ اِلَّا الَّذِيۡنَ عٰهَدۡتُّمۡ عِنۡدَ الۡمَسۡجِدِ الۡحَرَامِ‌ۚ فَمَا اسۡتَقَامُوۡا لَكُمۡ فَاسۡتَقِيۡمُوۡا لَهُمۡ‌ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ يُحِبُّ الۡمُتَّقِيۡنَ ۝٧

(9-7) How can there be a covenant with those who associate others with Allah in His Divinity be binding upon Allah and His Messenger, excepting those with whom you made a covenant near the Sacred Mosque? (9) Behave in a straight manner with them so long as they behave with you in a straight manner for Allah loves the Godfearing.

(9) That is: Bani Kinanah and Bani Khuzaah and Bani Damrah

كَيۡفَ وَاِنۡ يَّظۡهَرُوۡا عَلَيۡكُمۡ لَا يَرۡقُبُوۡا فِيۡكُمۡ اِلًّا وَّلَا ذِمَّةً‌ؕ يُرۡضُوۡنَكُمۡ بِاَفۡوَاهِهِمۡ وَتَاۡبٰى قُلُوۡبُهُمۡ وَاَكۡثَرُهُمۡ فٰسِقُوۡنَ ۝٨

(9-8) How can there be any covenant with the other polytheists for were they to prevail against you, they will respect neither kinship nor agreement. They seek to please you with their tongues while their hearts are averse to you, (10) and most of them are wicked. (11)

(10) That is, “Though outwardly they negotiated for peace treaties, they cherished evil intentions in their hearts, and waited for an opportune moment to break them. And this was borne by later experiences.”

(11) They were evil-doers because they had no sense of moral responsibilities nor did they hesitate to break moral limits.

اِشۡتَرَوۡا بِاٰيٰتِ اللّٰهِ ثَمَنًا قَلِيۡلًا فَصَدُّوۡا عَنۡ سَبِيۡلِهٖ‌ؕ اِنَّهُمۡ سَآءَ مَا كَانُوۡا يَعۡمَلُوۡنَ ۝٩

(9-9) They have sold the revelations of Allah for a paltry price (12) and have firmly hindered people from His Path. (13) Evil indeed is what they have done.

(12) That is, when they had to make a choice between the divine guidance and the transitory worldly ambitions, they chose the latter, because they did not comprehend the comparative values of the two. Whereas the revelations of Allah were inviting them to goodness, righteousness and observance of the divine law, which lead to eternal bliss. They chose to follow the unbridled lusts of their

selves which gained some transitory worldly benefits for them, but consequently led them to eternal perdition.

(13) Those evil-doers “hindered (people) from His Way”, for they not only chose misguidance for themselves but also tried to prevent others from following the right way. They put every kind of obstruction in the way of the invitation to righteousness; nay, they tried their best to gag the mouths of those who were extending that invitation and make their lives hard for them. In short, they did all they could to prevent the establishment of the righteous system of life that Allah required the people to establish.

لَا يَرْقُبُوْا فِيْ مُؤْمِنٍ اِلًّا وَّلَا ذِمَّةً ؕ وَاُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الْمُعْتَدُوْنَ ۝١٠

(9-10) They neither have any respect for kinship nor for agreement in respect of the believers. Such are indeed transgressors.

فَاِنْ تَابُوْا وَاَقَامُوا الصَّلٰوةَ وَاٰتَوُا الزَّكٰوةَ فَاِخْوَانُكُمْ فِى الدِّيْنِ ؕ وَنُفَصِّلُ الْاٰيٰتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَّعْلَمُوْنَ ۝١١

(9-11) But if they repent and establish Prayer and give Zakah they are your brothers in faith. Thus do We expound Our revelations to those who know. (14)

(14) Here too, it has explicitly been stated that those who repent will not become your brethren in faith without the observance of Salat and Zakat.

“Then they are your brothers in religion”: This means that if they fulfill those conditions, then not only shall their lives and properties become unlawful for you but also they shall enjoy equal rights with you in the Islamic community. There shall be no distinction between them and the other Muslims in regard to social, cultural, legal and political rights, and nothing will stand in their way to the progress for which they are otherwise qualified.

وَاِنْ نَّكَثُوْٓا اَيْمَانَهُمْ مِّنْۢ بَعْدِ عَهْدِهِمْ وَطَعَنُوْا فِىْ دِيْنِكُمْ فَقَاتِلُوْٓا اَئِمَّةَ الْكُفْرِ ۙ اِنَّهُمْ لَآ اَيْمَانَ لَهُمْ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَنْتَهُوْنَ ۝١٢

(9-12) But if they break their pledges after making them and attack your faith, make war on the leaders of unbelief that they may desist, for they have no regard for their pledged words. (15)

(15) In the context, the words, oaths, and compacts mean the compact of the acceptance of Islam. Therefore, the question of making a new compact with them does not arise. As regards the old pacts, they had already broken all of them. It is on account of this that the declaration of immunity (from obligations) by Allah and His Messenger (peace be upon him) has been clearly made. It has also been stated that such people are not worthy of any treaty and they can only be let off if they repent of their disbelief and shirk and establish Salat and pay Zakat dues. This verse states clearly how the renegades should be treated. As a matter of fact, this verse forestalled the mischief of apostasy that broke out a year and a half after its revelation and Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him) followed the guidance given in this verse to crush it.

اَلَا تُقٰتِلُوۡنَ قَوۡمًا نَّكَثُوۡۤا اَيۡمَانَهُمۡ وَهَمُّوۡا بِاِخۡرَاجِ الرَّسُوۡلِ وَهُمۡ بَدَءُوۡكُمۡ اَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ ؕ اَتَخۡشَوۡنَهُمۡ ۚ فَاللّٰهُ اَحَقُّ اَنۡ تَخۡشَوۡهُ اِنۡ كُنۡتُمۡ مُّؤۡمِنِيۡنَ ﴿۱۳﴾

(9-13) Will you not fight (16) against those who broke their pledges and did all they could to drive the Messenger away and initiated hostilities against you? Do you fear them? Surely Allah has greater right that you should fear Him, if you are true believers.

(16) In this passage the addressees are the Muslims. They have been urged to fight perseveringly in the Way of Allah, without paying the least heed to their ties of blood and relationship and to their worldly interests. In order to understand fully the spirit of this passage, the reader should keep in view the state of affairs at the time, when the abrogation of the treaties was declared. Though Islam was reigning supreme in the greater part of Arabia and there was no greater power to challenge its supremacy, still superficial observers saw a number of dangers in the extreme step which was being taken at that time.

First, it was feared that the abrogating of the treaties with all the mushrik clans at one and the same time, and debarring them from Hajj and changing the guardianship of the Kabah and abolishing all the rituals of ignorance, would so incite the mushriks and the hypocrites and kindle such fire of enmity that they would be ready to shed the last drop of their blood for safeguarding their interests and prejudices.

Secondly, it was feared that the mushriks would be greatly enraged by this declaration which granted freedom of movement to the Muslims to perform Hajj, whereas it forbade the non-Muslims. Obviously this would also affect adversely their economic condition,

for Hajj played a very important part in the economic life of Arabia during that period of her history.

Lastly, it was feared that this would put to a hard trial those people who had embraced Islam recently after the peace treaty of Hudaibiyah and the conquest of Makkah. For many of their kith and kin were still mushriks. Some of whom had their interests closely bound up with those offices of ignorance which were abolished. Now it was obvious that the total war against the mushriks demanded that these new Muslims should not only kill their own near and dear ones but should also themselves abolish those ancient offices and distinctions which they had enjoyed for centuries.

Though, it is true that none of these dangers took any practical shape, there were good reasons for these apprehensions, for none could foresee the trends of events at the time of the abrogation of the treaties. And the dangers were averted because these commandments had prepared them beforehand to meet them. More than that: this preparedness produced other good results. The delegates from the remnants of the mushriks, their chiefs and rulers began to visit Al-Madinah and take the oath of allegiance to Islam and obedience to the prophet (peace be upon him), who let them retain their old positions and offices. These things proved that if the Muslims had not been in a state of readiness to take immediate action for enforcing the terms of the declaration with the sword, the events which followed might have taken a different direction. Therefore it was the need of the hour that the Muslims should have been vehemently urged for Jihad, and their apprehensions removed. That is why it was being enjoined that they should not let anything hinder them from doing the will of Allah. And this is the theme of this discourse.

قٰتِلُوْهُمْ يُعَذِّبْهُمُ اللّٰهُ بِاَيْدِيْكُمْ وَيُخْزِهِمْ وَيَنْصُرْكُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ وَيَشْفِ صُدُوْرَ قَوْمٍ مُّؤْمِنِيْنَ ١٤

(9-14) Make war on them. Allah will chastise them through you and will humiliate them. He will grant you victory over them, and will soothe the bosoms of those who believe,

وَيُذْهِبْ غَيْظَ قُلُوْبِهِمْ ۗ وَيَتُوْبُ اللّٰهُ عَلٰى مَنْ يَّشَآءُ ۗ وَاللّٰهُ عَلِيْمٌ حَكِيْمٌ ١٥

(9-15) and will remove rage from their hearts, and will enable whomsoever He wills to repent. (17) Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise.

(17) This was a subtle reference to the possibility of what actually was going to happen afterwards. “And He will remove”: this was to remove the misunderstandings of the Muslims who apprehended a bloody war as a result of the declaration. They were told that it was also possible that some of the enemies might repent and embrace Islam. This was not made quite plain lest it should slacken the war preparations of the Muslims on one side and weaken the force of the warning to the mushriks on the other. The latter thing might have hindered the mushriks from giving a serious thought to the critical position they were in that finally led them to embrace Islam.

اَمْ حَسِبْتُمْ اَنْ تُتْرَكُوْا وَلَمَّا يَعْلَمِ اللّٰهُ الَّذِيْنَ جٰهَدُوْا مِنْكُمْ وَلَمْ يَتَّخِذُوْا مِنْ دُوْنِ اللّٰهِ وَلَا رَسُوْلِهٖ وَلَا الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ وَلِيْجَةً ۗ وَاللّٰهُ خَبِيْرٌۢ بِمَا تَعْمَلُوْنَ ۝١٦

(9-16) Do you imagine that you will be spared without being subjected to any test? Know well that Allah has not yet determined who strove hard (in His cause), and has not taken any others instead of His Messenger and the believers as his trusted allies? (18) Allah is well aware of all that you do.

(18) The addressees in Ayat 16 were those Muslims who had recently embraced Islam. It means to tell them plainly: “Now that you have embraced Islam, you shall have to give a genuine proof by a trial that you have accepted it because you believe in its truth and not because it has become supreme in the country by the exertions of the true believers. The trial is that you shall have to sacrifice your lives, wealth, and your near and dear ones for the sake of Allah and His Way. Then and only then, you will be regarded as true believers.

مَاكَانَ لِلْمُشْرِكِ بِنَ اَنْ يَّعْمُرُو امَسٰجِدَ اللِا شٰهِدِ نَعَ لٰى اَنْفُسِهِمْ بِالْكُفْرِ اُولٰٓئِكَ حَبِطَتْ اَعْمٰلُهُمْ وَفِى النَّارِ هُمْ خٰلِدُ نَوْ١٧

(9-17) It does not become those who associate others with Allah in His Divinity to visit and tend Allah's mosques while they bear witness of unbelief against themselves. (19) All their works have gone to waste. (20) They shall abide in the Fire.

(19) This lays down the general principle for the guardianship of the places of worship that have been built exclusively for the worship of Allah. Obviously, those people who associate others with Allah in His essence, His rights and His powers cannot be the proper persons to be the guardians, the servants, the managers etc. of such sacred places. And when they themselves reject the invitations to Tauhid, and openly declare that they are not going to dedicate their worship and obedience exclusively o Allah, they automatically forfeit any right they had for the guardianship of such places of worship that had been built for the worship of Allah alone. Though the principle is of a general nature, it has been mentioned here with the particular object of removing the mushriks from the guardianship of the Kabah and Masjid-i-Haram and establishing permanently the guardianship of the worshipers of one God over them.

(20) “Their deeds have become worthless”: including the little real service they did to the house of Allah because they mixed with it shirk and other practices of ignorance. Their little good was destroyed by their far greater evils.

اِنَّمَا يَعْمُرُ مَسٰجِدَ اللِا مَنْ اٰمَنَ بِاللِا وَالْيَوْمِ لْاٰخِرِ وَاَقَامَ الصَّلٰوةَ وَاٰتَى الزَّكٰوةَ وَلَمْ يَخْشَ اِلَّا اللِا فَعَسٰٓى اُولٰٓئِكَ اَنْ يَّكُوْنُوْا مِنَ الْمُهْتَدِيْنَ رَ١٨

(9-18) It only becomes those who believe in Allah and the Last Day and establish Prayer and pay Zakah and fear none but Allah to visit and tend the mosques of Allah. These are likely to be guided aright.

اَجَعَلْتُمْ سِقَايَۃَ الْحَآجِّ وَعِمَارَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ كَمَنْ اٰمَنَ بِاللّٰهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْاٰخِرِ وَجٰهَدَ فِىْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ ؕ لَا يَسْتَوٗنَ عِنْدَ اللّٰهِ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ لَا يَهْدِى الْقَوْمَ الظّٰلِمِيْنَ ۱۹

(9-19) Do you consider providing water to the Pilgrims and tending the Sacred Mosque equal in worth to believing in Allah and the Last Day and striving in the cause of Allah? (21) The two are not equal with Allah. Allah does not direct the wrong-doing folk to the Right Way.

(21) This question has been posed to bring home the fact that the guardianship of a shrine or attendance at it or other religious acts that are done for show, and are exploited by worldly people to establish and maintain the show of their piety, have no value whatsoever in the sight of Allah. The real worth of a person with Allah is that he should be sincere in his beliefs and make sacrifices in the Way of Allah, no matter whether he enjoys or does not enjoy such distinctions or happens to descend or not from a family of saints. On the contrary, those people who lack these excellences have no value with Allah, no matter whether they be the descendants of saints or inherit the guardianship of shrines from a long line of saints, or perform some religious acts for show on special occasions. And it is not lawful in any way that the guardianship, etc. of sacred places and institutions should be left in the hands of these worthless people just because they happen to inhere such rights from their forefathers.

اَلَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَهَاجَرُوْا وَجٰهَدُوْا فِىْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ بِاَمْوَالِهِمْ وَاَنْفُسِهِمْ اَعْظَمُ دَرَجَةً عِنْدَ اللّٰهِ ؕ وَاُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الْفَآئِزُوْنَ ۲۰

(9-20) The higher rank with Allah is for those who believed and migrated and strove in His cause with their belongings and their persons. It is they who are triumphant.

يُبَشِّرُهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ بِرَحْمَةٍ مِّنْهُ وَرِضْوَانٍ وَّجَنّٰتٍ لَّهُمْ فِيْهَا نَعِيْمٌ مُّقِيْمٌ ۲۱

(9-21) Their Lord gives them glad tidings of mercy from Him and of His good pleasure. For them await Gardens of eternal bliss.

خٰلِدِينَ فِيۡهَاۤ اَبَدًا ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ عِنۡدَهٗۤ اَجۡرٌ عَظِيۡمٌ ﴿۲۲﴾

(9-22) Therein they shall abide forever. Surely with Allah a mighty reward awaits them.

يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيۡنَ اٰمَنُوۡا لَا تَتَّخِذُوۡۤا اٰبَآءَكُمۡ وَ اِخۡوَانَكُمۡ اَوۡلِيَآءَ اِنِ اسۡتَحَبُّوا الۡكُفۡرَ عَلَى الۡاِيۡمَانِ ؕ وَمَنۡ يَّتَوَلَّهُمۡ مِّنۡكُمۡ فَاُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الظّٰلِمُوۡنَ ﴿۲۳﴾

(9-23) Believers, do not take your fathers and your brothers for your allies if they choose unbelief in preference to belief. Whosoever of you takes them as allies those are wrong-doers.

قُلۡ اِنۡ كَانَ اٰبَآؤُكُمۡ وَاَبۡنَآؤُكُمۡ وَ اِخۡوَانُكُمۡ وَاَزۡوَاجُكُمۡ وَعَشِيۡرَتُكُمۡ وَ اَمۡوَالُ اقۡتَرَفۡتُمُوۡهَا وَتِجَارَةٌ تَخۡشَوۡنَ كَسَادَهَا وَمَسٰكِنُ تَرۡضَوۡنَهَاۤ اَحَبَّ اِلَيۡكُمۡ مِّنَ اللّٰهِ وَرَسُوۡلِهٖ وَجِهَادٍ فِىۡ سَبِيۡلِهٖ فَتَرَبَّصُوۡا حَتّٰى يَاۡتِىَ اللّٰهُ بِاَمۡرِهٖ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ لَا يَهۡدِى الۡقَوۡمَ الۡفٰسِقِيۡنَ ﴿۲۴﴾

(9-24) Tell them, (O Prophet): "If your fathers and your sons and your brothers and your wives and your tribe and the riches you have acquired and the commerce of which you fear a slackening, and the dwellings that you love, if they are dearer to you than Allah and His Messenger and striving in His cause, then wait until Allah brings about His decree. [22] Allah does not guide the evil-doing folk."

(22) That is: “The judgment will deprive them of the blessings of the true faith, and of the honor of bearing its standard and leading the world towards its guidance and bestow these on others”.

لَقَدۡ نَصَرَكُمُ اللّٰهُ فِىۡ مَوَاطِنَ كَثِيۡرَةٍ ۙ وَّيَوۡمَ حُنَيۡنٍ ۙ اِذۡ اَعۡجَبَتۡكُمۡ كَثۡرَتُكُمۡ فَلَمۡ تُغۡنِ عَنۡكُمۡ شَيۡـًٔا وَّضَاقَتۡ عَلَيۡكُمُ الۡاَرۡضُ بِمَا رَحُبَتۡ ثُمَّ وَلَّيۡتُمۡ مُّدۡبِرِيۡنَ ﴿۲۵﴾

(9-25) Surely Allah has succored you before on many a battlefield, and (you have yourselves witnessed His succor to you) [23] on the day of Hunayn when your numbers made you proud, but they did you no good, and the earth, for all its vastness, constrained you, and you turned your backs in retreat.

(23) This has been mentioned to allay the fears of those who were afraid of the consequences of the declaration of the abrogation of the treaties, as if to say, “Why are you afraid of war.” That Allah, Who helped you in far worse and dangerous situations on so many occasions before this, is there even now to help you. Had this mission depended on your might, it could not have come out

victorious in the hard trials at Makkah, nor in the battle of Badr when the odds were heavily against you. This is because Allah's power has been helping you, and past experiences have shown you how effective that power is. Rest assured that the same power will help you to succeed in your mission.

The battle of Hunain had taken place in the valley of Hunain between Taaif and Makkah in the month of Shawwal A.H. 8, a year or so before the revelation of this discourse. This was the first battle in which the Muslim army consisted of 12,000 fighters and this far outnumbered the army of the disbelievers. But in spite of this the archers of the Hawazin clan wrought havoc among the Muslim army and put them to rout. The Prophet (peace be upon him) and a few of his bravest companions, however, firmly stood their ground and rallied the routed army, and ultimately won the victory. It was because of their perseverance that the army reassembled and the Muslims ultimately won the victory; otherwise they would have lost much more at Hunain than they had gained by the conquest of Makkah.

ثُمَّ اَنۡزَلَ اللّٰهُ سَكِيۡنَتَهٗ عَلٰى رَسُوۡلِهٖ وَعَلَى الۡمُؤۡمِنِيۡنَ وَاَنۡزَلَ جُنُوۡدًا لَّمۡ تَرَوۡهَا وَعَذَّبَ الَّذِيۡنَ كَفَرُوۡا ؕ وَ ذٰلِكَ جَزَآءُ الۡكٰفِرِيۡنَ ﴿۲۶﴾

(9-26) Then Allah caused His tranquility to descend upon His Messenger and upon the believers, and He sent down hosts whom you did not see, and chastised those who disbelieved. Such is the recompense of those who deny the Truth.

ثُمَّ يَتُوۡبُ اللّٰهُ مِنۡۢ بَعۡدِ ذٰلِكَ عَلٰى مَنۡ يَّشَآءُ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ غَفُوۡرٌ رَّحِيۡمٌ ﴿۲۷﴾

(9-27) Then (after so chastising the unbelievers), Allah enables, whomsoever He wills, to repent. (24) Allah is All-Forgiving, All-Merciful.

(24) "Allah will accept repentance" refers to the large number of the disbelievers who embraced Islam after the victory at Hunain as a result of the kind and generous treatment they received from the Prophet (peace be upon him), in spite of their former antagonism. This was mentioned to allay the anxiety of those new Muslims who feared that, as a result of the declaration, all of their mushrik relatives would be put to death. (E.N. 16). They have been told to expect, in the light of the previous experiences, that the mushriks would be obliged to accept Islam, when they realize that neither any hope of the revival of the order of ignorance was left nor of any props to support it.

يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيۡنَ اٰمَنُوۡۤا اِنَّمَا الۡمُشۡرِكُوۡنَ نَجَسٌ فَلَا يَقۡرَبُوا الۡمَسۡجِدَ الۡحَرَامَ بَعۡدَ عَامِهِمۡ هٰذَا ۚ وَ اِنۡ خِفۡتُمۡ عَيۡلَةً فَسَوۡفَ يُغۡنِيۡكُمُ اللّٰهُ مِنۡ فَضۡلِهٖۤ اِنۡ شَآءَ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ عَلِيۡمٌ حَكِيۡمٌ ۲۸

(9-28) Believers, those who associate others with Allah in His Divinity are unclean. So, after the expiry of this year, let them not even go near the Sacred Mosque. (25) And should you fear poverty, Allah will enrich you out of His bounty, if He wills. Surely Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise.

(25) This prohibition was meant to root out all the vestiges of shirk and ignorance. For the mushriks were prohibited not only from the performance of Hajj and attendance at the Al-Masjid-Al-Haram but also from entering into its sacred precincts.

They are unclean in their creeds, in their morals, in their deeds, and in their ways of ignorance, and not in their physical bodies by themselves. That is the reason why they have been prohibited from entering the sacred precincts of the holy place.

This prohibition has been interpreted in different ways. Imam Abu Hanifah is of the view that it prohibits them only from the performance of Hajj and Umrah, and from the observance of the rites of ignorance in the holy precincts. But Imam Shafi is of the opinion that they have been forbidden even to enter the Al-Masjid-Al-Haram for any purpose whatsoever. Imam Malik is of the opinion that they are forbidden not only to enter Al-Masjid-Al-Haram but any mosque at all. It is, however, obvious that the last opinion is not correct, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) himself permitted mushriks to enter the Prophet’s mosque at Al-Madinah.

قٰتِلُوا الَّذِيۡنَ لَا يُؤۡمِنُوۡنَ بِاللّٰهِ وَلَا بِالۡيَوۡمِ الۡاٰخِرِ وَ لَا يُحَرِّمُوۡنَ مَا حَرَّمَ اللّٰهُ وَرَسُوۡلُهٗ وَلَا يَدِيۡنُوۡنَ دِيۡنَ الۡحَقِّ مِنَ الَّذِيۡنَ اُوۡتُوا الۡكِتٰبَ حَتّٰى يُعۡطُوا الۡجِزۡيَةَ عَنۡ يَّدٍ وَّهُمۡ صٰغِرُوۡنَ ۲۹

(9-29) Those who do not believe in Allah and the Last Day (26) - even though they were given the scriptures, and who do not hold as unlawful (27) that which Allah and His Messenger have declared to be unlawful, and who do not follow the true religion - fight against them until they pay tribute out of their hand and are utterly subdued. (28)

(26) Though the people of the Book professed to believe in Allah and the Hereafter, in fact they believed in neither. For only that

person really believes in Allah who acknowledges Him as the only one God and the only one Lord, and does not associate with Him any other, whatsoever, in His Being, in His characteristics, in His rights and in His powers and authority. But according to this definition of shirk both the Christians and the Jews were guilty of shirk as has been made plain in the verses that follow: therefore their profession of belief in Allah was meaningless. Likewise they did not really believe in the Hereafter, in spite of the fact that they believed in resurrection. For it is not enough: one must also believe that on that Day absolute justice will be done on the basis of one's belief and actions. One should also believe that no ransom and no expiation and no spiritual relationships with any saint shall be of any avail on that Day. It is absolutely meaningless to believe in the Hereafter without this. And the Jews and the Christians had polluted their faiths because they believed that such things would protect them against justice on that day.

(27) The second reason why Jihad should be waged against them is that they did not adopt the law sent down by Allah through His Messenger.

(28) This is the aim of Jihad with the Jews and the Christians and it is not to force them to become Muslims and adopt the Islamic way of life. They should be forced to pay jizyah in order to put an end to their independence and supremacy so that they should not remain rulers and sovereigns in the land. These powers should be wrested from them by the followers of the true faith, who should assume the sovereignty and lead others towards the right way, while they should become their subjects and pay jizyah. Jizyah is paid by those non-Muslims who live as zimmis (proteges) in an Islamic state, in exchange for the security and protection granted to them by it. This is also symbolical of the fact that they themselves agree to live in it as its subjects. This is the significance of "they pay the tribute out of (their) hand," that is, "with full consent so that they willingly become the subjects of the believers, who perform the duty of the vicegerents of Allah on the earth."

At first this command applied only to the Jews and the Christians. Then the Prophet (peace be upon him) himself extended it to the Zoroastrians also. After his death, his companions unanimously applied this rule to all the non Muslim nations outside Arabia.

This is jizyah of which the Muslims have been feeling apologetic during the last two centuries of their degeneration and

there are still some people who continue to apologize for it. But the way of Allah is straight and clear and does not stand in need of any apology to the rebels against Allah. Instead of offering apologies on behalf of Islam for the measure that guarantees security of life, property and faith to those who choose to live under its protection, the Muslims should feel proud of such a humane law as that of jizyah. For it is obvious that the maximum freedom that can be allowed to those who do not adopt the Way of Allah but choose to tread the ways of error is that they should be tolerated to lead the life they like. That is why the Islamic state offers them protection, if they agree to live as its zimmis by paying jizyah, but it cannot allow that they should remain supreme rulers in any place and establish wrong ways and impose them on others. As this state of things inevitably produces chaos and disorder, it is the duty of the true Muslims to exert their utmost to bring to an end their wicked rule and bring them under a righteous order.

As regards the question, “What do the non-Muslims get in return for jizyah”, it may suffice to say that it is the price of the freedom which the Islamic state allows them in following their erroneous ways, while living in the jurisdiction of Islam and enjoying its protection. The money thus collected is spent in maintaining the righteous administration that gives them the freedom and protects their rights. This also serves as a yearly reminder to them that they have been deprived of the honor of paying Zakat in the Way of Allah, and forced to pay jizyah instead as a price of following the ways of error.

وَقَالَتِ الْيَهُودُ عُزَيْرُ ابْنُ اللّٰهِ وَقَالَتِ النَّصٰرَى الْمَسِيْحُ ابْنُ اللّٰهِ ۗ ذٰلِكَ قَوْلُهُمْ بِاَفْوَاهِهِمْ ۚ يُضَاهِـُٔوْنَ قَوْلَ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا مِنْ قَبْلُ ۗ قٰتَلَهُمُ اللّٰهُ ۚ اَنّٰى يُؤْفَكُوْنَ ٣٠

(9-30) The Jews say: "Ezra ('Uzair) is Allah's son," [29] and the Christians say: "The Messiah is the son of Allah." These are merely verbal assertions in imitation of the sayings of those unbelievers who preceded them. [30] May Allah ruin them. How do they turn away from the Truth?

(29) Uzair (Ezra) lived during the period around 450 B.C. The Jews regarded him with great reverence as the revivalist of their Scriptures which had been lost during their captivity in Babylon after the death of prophet Solomon. So much so that they had lost all the knowledge of their law, their traditions and of Hebrew, their national language. Then it was Ezra who re-wrote the Old Testament and revived the law. That is why they used very exaggerated language in his reverence which misled some of the Jewish sects to make him

‘the son of God’. The Quran, however, does not assert that all the Jews were unanimous in declaring Ezra as the son of God. What it intends to say is that the perversion in the articles of faith of the Jews concerning Allah had degenerated to such an extent that there were some amongst them who considered Ezra as the son of God.

(30) “Those who disbelieved before” were the Egyptians, the Greeks, the Romans, the Persians, etc. The Jews and the Christians were so influenced by their philosophies, their superstitions and fancies that they also invented erroneous creeds like theirs. (See E.N. 101 of Al-Maidah).

اِتَّخَذُوۡۤا اَحۡبَارَهُمۡ وَرُهۡبَانَهُمۡ اَرۡبَابًا مِّنۡ دُوۡنِ اللّٰهِ وَالۡمَسِيۡحَ ابۡنَ مَرۡيَمَ ۚ وَمَاۤ اُمِرُوۡۤا اِلَّا لِيَعۡبُدُوۡۤا اِلٰهًا وَّاحِدًا ۚ لَاۤ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا هُوَ ؕ سُبۡحٰنَهٗ عَمَّا يُشۡرِكُوۡنَ ﴿۳۱﴾

(9-31) They take their rabbis and their monks for their lords apart from Allah, (31) and also the Messiah, son of Mary, whereas they were commanded to worship none but the One True God. There is no god but He. Exalted be He above those whom they associate with Him in His Divinity.

(31) “They have taken their rabbis and monks as their lords”. The Prophet (peace be upon him) himself explained its true significance. According to a tradition, when Adi bin Hatim (may Allah be pleased with him), who was formerly a Christian, came to the Prophet (peace be upon him) with the intention of understanding Islam, he asked several questions in order to remove his doubts. One of these was: “This verse accuses us of taking our scholars and monks as our lords. What is its real meaning. For we do not take them as our lords.”

As a reply to this, the Prophet (peace be upon him) put him a counter question: “Is it not a fact that you accept as unlawful what they declare to be unlawful, and lawful what they declare to be lawful?” Adi confessed, “Yes, it is so.” The Prophet (peace be upon him) replied, “This amounts to making them your lords.” Incidentally, this tradition shows that those who themselves set limits to the lawful and the unlawful without the authority of Allah’s Book, assume for themselves the rank of godhead, and those who acknowledge their right of making laws take them as their lords.

It should be noted that they have been charged with (a) attributing sons to Allah, and (b) giving the right of making laws to others than Allah. These are to prove that their claim that they believed in Allah is false, even though they should believe in His

existence. But such a wrong conception of Allah makes their belief in Allah meaningless.

يُرِيۡدُوۡنَ اَنۡ يُّطۡفِـُٔوۡا نُوۡرَ اللّٰهِ بِاَفۡوَاهِهِمۡ وَيَاۡبَى اللّٰهُ اِلَّاۤ اَنۡ يُّتِمَّ نُوۡرَهٗ وَلَوۡ كَرِهَ الۡكٰفِرُوۡنَ ۳۲

(9-32) They seek to extinguish the light of Allah by blowing through their mouths; but Allah refuses everything except that He will perfect His light howsoever the unbelievers might abhor it.

هُوَ الَّذِىۡۤ اَرۡسَلَ رَسُوۡلَهٗ بِالۡهُدٰى وَدِيۡنِ الۡحَـقِّ لِيُظۡهِرَهٗ عَلَى الدِّيۡنِ كُلِّهٖ وَلَوۡ كَرِهَ الۡمُشۡرِكُوۡنَ ۳۳

(9-33) He it is Who has sent His Messenger with the guidance and the True Religion that He may make it prevail over all religions, (32) howsoever those who associate others with Allah in His Divinity might detest it.

(32) The Arabic word ad-din has been translated into ‘ways’. For the word deen, as has already been explained in E.N. 204, Al-Baqarah, is used for the ‘way of life’ or the ‘system of life’, which is followed in obedience to the supreme authority.

Now let us try to understand the significance of this verse. The object of the mission of the Messenger is to make the guidance and the right way he has brought from Allah dominant over all the other ways and systems of life. In other words, the Messenger is not sent to allow Allah’s Way to remain subordinate to other ways in order to enjoy concessions from them. He is sent by the Sovereign of the earth and the heavens to make His Way dominant over all other ways. And if a wrong way is at all allowed to remain on the earth, it should be tolerated only under its own protection by the payment of jizyah under the limits conferred by the divine system as in the cast of the system of life of the zimmis who pay jizyah.

يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيۡنَ اٰمَنُوۡۤا اِنَّ كَثِيۡرًا مِّنَ الۡاَحۡبَارِ وَالرُّهۡبَانِ لَيَاۡكُلُوۡنَ اَمۡوَالَ النَّاسِ بِالۡبَاطِلِ وَيَصُدُّوۡنَ عَنۡ سَبِيۡلِ اللّٰهِ ؕ وَالَّذِيۡنَ يَكۡنِزُوۡنَ الذَّهَبَ وَالۡفِضَّةَ وَلَا يُنۡفِقُوۡنَهَا فِىۡ سَبِيۡلِ اللّٰهِ ۙ فَبَشِّرۡهُمۡ بِعَذَابٍ اَلِيۡمٍ ۳۴

(9-34) Believers! Many of the rabbis and monks wrongfully devour mankind's possessions and hinder people from the Way of Allah. (33) And there are those who amass gold and silver and do not spend it in the Way of Allah. Announce to them the tidings of a painful chastisement

(33) These religious leaders are guilty of two sins. First, they devour the wealth of the common people by selling false decrees, and by taking bribes, gifts and presents on different pretexts. They invent religious regulations and rituals as tempt people to buy their salvations and fortunes in life from them and make deaths and marriages dependent on the payment of due price to these monopolists of Paradise. To add to this another sin, they debar the people from the Way of Allah by involving them into different sorts of deviations and by obstructing the way of every righteous mission with the obstacles of learned doubts and pious suspicions.

يَّوْمَ يُحْمٰى عَلَيْهَا فِيْ نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ فَتُكْوٰى بِهَا جِبَاهُهُمْ وَجُنُوْبُهُمْ وَظُهُوْرُهُمْ ۭ هٰذَا مَا كَنَزْتُمْ لِاَنْفُسِكُمْ فَذُوْقُوْا مَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْنِزُوْنَ ۳۵

(9-35) on a Day when they shall be heated up in the Fire of Hell, and their foreheads and their sides and their backs shall be branded with it, (and they shall be told): "This is the treasure which you hoarded for yourselves. Taste, then, the punishment for what you have hoarded."

اِنَّ عِدَّةَ الشُّهُوْرِ عِنْدَ اللّٰهِ اثْنَا عَشَرَ شَهْرًا فِيْ كِتٰبِ اللّٰهِ يَوْمَ خَلَقَ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضَ مِنْهَآ اَرْبَعَةٌ حُرُمٌ ۭ ذٰلِكَ الدِّيْنُ الْقَيِّمُ ۙ فَلَا تَظْلِمُوْا فِيْهِنَّ اَنْفُسَكُمْ وَقٰتِلُوا الْمُشْرِكِيْنَ كَاۗفَّةً كَمَا يُقَاتِلُوْنَكُمْ كَاۗفَّةً ۭ وَاعْلَمُوْٓا اَنَّ اللّٰهَ مَعَ الْمُتَّقِيْنَ ۳۶

(9-36) Surely the reckoning of months, in the sight of Allah, is twelve months, (34) laid down in Allah's decree on the day when He created the heavens and the earth; and out of these months four are sacred. That is the true ordainment. Do not, therefore, wrong yourselves, with respect to these months. (35) And fight all together against those who associate others with Allah in His Divinity in the manner that they fight against you all together, (36) and know well that Allah is with the God-fearing.

(34) This means that ever since Allah created the sun, the moon and the earth, the new moon takes place only once in a month; thus the year has always been of twelve months.

This has been mentioned to refute the practice of nasi (Ayat 37) whereby the pagan Arabs increased the number of the months of a year to 13 or 14 to enable them to interpose in the calendar the forbidden month which had been made lawful by them.

(35) “So do not wrong yourselves in them.” Do not let go waste the good things for which fighting has been made unlawful during

these months by creating disorder in them that will ultimately be harmful to you also. The four forbidden months are Zil-Qadah, Zil-Hajjah and Muharram for Hajj and Rajab for Umrah.

(36) That is, “If the mushriks do not desist from fighting during these months, you should also fight them and present a united front against them, just as they put up a united front against you”. This verse has been explained by Ayat 194 of Al-Baqarah.

اِنَّمَا النَّسِیۡٓءُ زِیَادَۃٌ فِی الۡکُفۡرِ یُضَلُّ بِہِ الَّذِیۡنَ کَفَرُوۡا یُحِلُّوۡنَہٗ عَامًا وَّ یُحَرِّمُوۡنَہٗ عَامًا لِّیُوَاطِـُٔوۡا عِدَّۃَ مَا حَرَّمَ اللّٰہُ فَیُحِلُّوۡا مَا حَرَّمَ اللّٰہُ ؕ زُیِّنَ لَہُمۡ سُوۡٓءُ اَعۡمَالِہِمۡ ؕ وَ اللّٰہُ لَا یَہۡدِی الۡقَوۡمَ الۡکٰفِرِیۡنَ ﴿۳۷﴾

(9-37) The intercalation (of sacred months) is an act of gross infidelity which causes the unbelievers to be led further astray. They declare a month to be lawful in one year and forbidden in another year in order that they may conform to the number of months that Allah has declared as sacred, and at the same time make lawful what Allah has forbidden. (37) Their foul acts seem fair to them. Allah does not direct those who deny the Truth to the Right Way.

(37) The pagan Arabs practiced nasi in two ways. Whenever it suited them, they would declare a prohibited month to be an ordinary month in which fighting, robbery and murder in retaliation were lawful for them. Then they would declare an ordinary month to be a prohibited month instead of this month in order to make up for the deficiency caused in the number of the prohibited months.

The other way of nasi was the addition of a month in order to harmonize the lunar with the solar year so that the Hajj should always fall in the same season and they should be saved from the bother and inconvenience that are experienced by its observance according to the lunar year. In this way Hajj was observed for 36 years on dates other than the actual dates. Then in the thirty seventh year it was again observed on the 9th and 10th of Zil-Hajjah, as they should have actually fallen according to the lunar calendar. It so happened that on the occasion when the Prophet (peace be upon him) performed Hajja-tul-Widaa (his last Hajj). these dates by rotation coincided with the actual dates of Hajj according to the lunar calendar. So he declared during the course of his historic address at Arafat: “This year the dates of Hajj have again occurred exactly at their natural and proper time after a long period of circulation.” Accordingly, since that last Hajj of A.H. 9, it is being

observed up to this day according to the correct dates of the lunar year.

By making nasi unlawful and forbidding it, the law declared that the two objects for which it was practiced were also sinful. First, they not only made lawful what Allah had made unlawful but also tried to practice deception on Allah by the seeming observance of the law. As regards the second object of making the season of Hajj fixed permanently according to the solar calendar, this too, was in fact the worst kind of rebellion against the divine law, although it appeared to be a harmless thing done for public good. But it defeated the very object of the divine law which prescribed the lunar calendar instead of the solar calendar for the observance of obligatory duties. Allah did this to ensure many good things for the Muslims, one of which is that His servants should be so trained as to obey His commandments at all times of the year and under all circumstances. For instance, the month of Ramadan circulates among all the seasons of the year and the Muslims get used to obeying His commandments whether it be summer or winter, dry or rainy season. This gives them that excellent moral training which is the real object of all the obligatory duties imposed by the divine law. Likewise, the dates of Hajj according to the lunar calendar, fall during different seasons: therefore the servants of Allah have to travel during all the seasons, favorable and unfavorable. Thus they come out successful in the divine test under all the circumstances and learn to be steadfast in their obedience.

It is obvious that such a training will make them stand good in many other fields in which one has to fight the battle for the truth.

Now it would have become quite clear why nasi was made unlawful and forbidden. It was designed to fix the season of Hajj in order to suit their own conveniences though it defeated the divine purpose of Hajj and of the forbidden months. It meant that they had rebelled against Allah and become independent of Him; this is kufr. Besides this, Islam is a universal religion and for all human beings. It is obvious that the periods of fasting and performing Hajj cannot satisfy all if they be fixed in accordance with the months of the solar year. For if they are performed in fixed months according to the solar year, the one and the same month will not equally suit all for the simple reason that it will fall during the same seasons in different places, summer or winter or very hot or very cold or rainy or dry or harvesting or sowing, year after year.

In this connection it may also be kept in view that the proclamation about the prohibition of nasi was made on the occasion of Hajj in A.H. 9 and next year the Hajj was performed on right dates which were in accordance with the lunar year. Since that time Hajj is being performed according to exact dates.

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا مَا لَكُمْ اِذَا قِيْلَ لَكُمُ انْفِرُوْا فِيْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ اثَّاقَلْتُمْ اِلَى الْاَرْضِ ۭ اَرَضِيْتُمْ بِالْحَيٰوةِ الدُّنْيَا مِنَ الْاٰخِرَةِ ۚ فَمَا مَتَاعُ الْحَيٰوةِ الدُّنْيَا فِي الْاٰخِرَةِ اِلَّا قَلِيْلٌ ۝٣٨

(9-38) Believers! (38) What is amiss with you that when it is said to you: "March forth in the cause of Allah," you cling heavily to the earth? Do you prefer the worldly life to the Hereafter? Know well that all the enjoyment of this world, in comparison with the Hereafter, is trivial. (39)

(38) From here begins the discourse (Ayats 38-72) which was sent down at the time when the Prophet (peace be upon him) was engaged in making preparations for the campaign to Tabuk.

(39) “The enjoyment of the life of this world” may imply two meanings. First: “When you will find that the life in the Hereafter is eternal and see that the good things and the provisions of enjoyment are countless, you will realize that the potential and the actual enjoyments of the temporary life of this world were nothing as compared with the blessings of that great kingdom. At that time you will regret why you deprived yourselves of this everlasting happiness and bliss for the sake of a very little and short lived enjoyments of the mortal life of this world.” Second: “The goods of this worldly life are of no value in the Hereafter, howsoever abundant they might be. You shall have to give up each and everything as soon as you breathe your last. For nothing of this world can go with you to the next world. Of course, you will get credit for what you sacrificed for the pleasure and love of Allah, and love of Islam.”

اِلَّا تَنْفِرُوْا يُعَذِّبْكُمْ عَذَابًا اَلِيْمًا ۙ وَّيَسْتَبْدِلْ قَوْمًا غَيْرَكُمْ وَلَا تَضُرُّوْهُ شَيْـــًٔا ۭ وَاللّٰهُ عَلٰي كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيْرٌ ۝٣٩

(9-39) If you do not march forth, Allah will chastise you grievously (40) and will replace you by another people, (41) while you will in no way be able to harm Him. Allah has power over everything.

(40) A general rule of the Islamic conduct has been derived from, “If you do not go forth, He will punish you with a painful punishment.” When the Muslims are commanded to go to Jihad by a

public proclamation from their leader, it becomes an obligatory duty for those who are called upon to do Jihad, whether they belong to any particular group or region. So much so that the faith of those who do not go for Jihad without a genuine excuse becomes doubtful. But even in cases where the Muslims are called upon to go forth for Jihad and there is no command for the compulsory enrollment of every able-bodied Muslim of a particular group or region, it is a religious duty (though not obligatory), and it shall be considered to have been performed even if only some Muslims go forth for it.

(41) That is, “Allah’s work does not depend on you and will be accomplished only if you do it. It is Allah’s grace and bounty that He is affording you the golden opportunity of serving the cause of His Way. Therefore if you miss this opportunity because of any foolish assumption, Allah will raise another people and bestow on them the opportunity and capability of doing His work, and you will be losers”.

إِلَّا تَنصُرُوهُ فَقَدْ نَصَرَهُ اللَّهُ إِذْ أَخْرَجَهُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا ثَانِيَ اثْنَيْنِ إِذْ هُمَا فِي الْغَارِ إِذْ يَقُولُ لِصَاحِبِهِ لَا تَحْزَنْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَنَا فَأَنزَلَ اللَّهُ سَكِينَتَهُ عَلَيْهِ وَأَيَّدَهُ بِجُنُودٍ لَّمْ تَرَوْهَا وَجَعَلَ كَلِمَةَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا السُّفْلَىٰ ۗ وَكَلِمَةُ اللَّهِ هِيَ الْعُلْيَا ۗ وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٤٠﴾

(9-40) It will matter little if you do not help the Prophet, for Allah surely helped him when the unbelievers drove him out of his home and he was but one of the two when they were in the cave, and when he said to his companion: "Do not grieve. Allah is with us." (42) Then Allah caused His tranquility to descend upon him, and supported him with hosts you did not see, He humbled the word of the unbelievers. As for Allah's Word, it is inherently uppermost. Allah is All-Powerful, All-Wise.

(42) This refers to the occasion when the disbelievers had decided to assassinate the Prophet (peace be upon him), and the very night, fixed for his assassination, he had left Makkah for Al-Madinah. By that time most of the Muslims had migrated to Al-Madinah in twos and threes and only a few helpless ones had remained behind in Makkah. As he was sure that he would be pursued, he took only Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him) with him and went southward instead of following the northern route to Al- Madinah and remained hidden in the Thaur cave for three days. In the meantime the blood thirsty enemies had begun to make a thorough search for him all around Makkah and some of them reached the very mouth of the cave where he was hidden. On this critical occasion Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him) naturally felt alarmed lest they should peep into the cave, and see them. But the Prophet (peace be upon him) remained as calm as before and

reassured his companion, saying, “Do not grieve, indeed Allah is with us.”

اِنْفِرُوْا خِفَافًا وَّثِقَالًا وَّجٰهِدُوْا بِاَمْوَالِكُمْ وَاَنْفُسِكُمْ فِيْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ ۗ ذٰلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُوْنَ ﴿٤١﴾

(9-41) March forth whether light or heavy, (43) and strive in the way of Allah with your belongings and your lives. That is best for you if you only knew it.

(43) The words, “light-armed and heavy-armed” have a very comprehensive meaning: when it is enjoined to march forth for Jihad, you must go forth anyhow, whether you like it or not: whether you are in a state of prosperity or indigence, whether you are well-equipped or ill-equipped: whether the circumstances are favorable or adverse: whether you are young and healthy or old and weak.

لَوْ كَانَ عَرَضًا قَرِيْبًا وَّسَفَرًا قَاصِدًا لَّاتَّبَعُوْكَ وَلٰكِنْۢ بَعُدَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ الشُّقَّةُ ۗ وَسَيَحْلِفُوْنَ بِاللّٰهِ لَوِ اسْتَطَعْنَا لَخَرَجْنَا مَعَكُمْ ۚ يُهْلِكُوْنَ اَنْفُسَهُمْ ۚ وَاللّٰهُ يَعْلَمُ اِنَّهُمْ لَكٰذِبُوْنَ ﴿٤٢﴾

(9-42) Were it a gain at hand or a short journey, they would have surely followed you, but the distance seemed too far to them. (44) Still they will swear by Allah: "If only we could, we would surely have gone forth with you." They merely bring ruin upon themselves. Allah knows well that they are liars.

(44) They felt the journey to Tabuk to be hard because they had to fight with the army of the great and powerful Roman Empire: because they had to journey in the scorching heat of the summer season of the desert: because there was a famine in the country and the new harvest on which they had pinned their hopes was ready for reaping.

عَفَا اللّٰهُ عَنْكَ ۚ لِمَ اَذِنْتَ لَهُمْ حَتّٰى يَتَبَيَّنَ لَكَ الَّذِيْنَ صَدَقُوْا وَتَعْلَمَ الْكٰذِبِيْنَ ﴿٤٣﴾

(9-43) (O Prophet), may Allah forgive you! Why did you give them leave to stay behind before it became clear to you as to who were truthful and who were liars? (45)

(45) Allah did not approve of the exemption which the Prophet (peace be upon him) had granted to the hypocrites who had put forward lame excuses. Though he knew it well that they were inventing false excuses, he gave them leave to stay behind because

of his inherent kindness. But Allah warned him that such a leniency was not well placed as he gave them an opportunity of hiding their hypocrisy. Had they remained behind without getting an exemption, the false profession of their faith would have been exposed.

لَا يَسْتَاْذِنُكَ الَّذِيْنَ يُؤْمِنُوْنَ بِاللّٰهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْاٰخِرِ اَنْ يُّجَاهِدُوْا بِاَمْوَالِهِمْ وَاَنْفُسِهِمْ ۗ وَاللّٰهُ عَلِيْمٌۢ بِالْمُتَّقِيْنَ ﴿٤٤﴾

(9-44) Those who believe in Allah and the Last Day will never ask your leave to be excused from striving (in the cause of Allah) with their belongings and their lives. Allah fully knows the God-fearing.

اِنَّمَا يَسْتَاْذِنُكَ الَّذِيْنَ لَا يُؤْمِنُوْنَ بِاللّٰهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْاٰخِرِ وَارْتَابَتْ قُلُوْبُهُمْ فَهُمْ فِيْ رَيْبِهِمْ يَتَرَدَّدُوْنَ ﴿٤٥﴾

(9-45) It is only those who do not believe in Allah and the Last Day, and whose hearts are filled with doubt that seek exemption from striving (in the cause of Allah). They keep tossing to and fro in their doubt. (46)

(46) This verse shows clearly that the conflict between Islam and kufr is the criterion to distinguish between a true believer and a hypocrite. The one who supports Islam in this conflict with the whole of his heart and expends all of his energies and resources in order to make it victorious and does not hesitate in the least to make any sacrifices for this purpose, is a true believer. On the contrary, the one who hesitates to support Islam in this conflict and refrains from making sacrifices in its way, when he confronts the threat of the victory of kufr, is a hypocrite, for such an attitude is itself a proof of the fact that there is no faith in his heart.

وَلَوْ اَرَادُوا الْخُرُوْجَ لَاَعَدُّوْا لَهٗ عُدَّةً وَّلٰكِنْ كَرِهَ اللّٰهُ انْۢبِعَاثَهُمْ فَثَبَّطَهُمْ وَقِيْلَ اقْعُدُوْا مَعَ الْقٰعِدِيْنَ ﴿٤٦﴾

(9-46) Had they truly intended to march forth to fight, they would have certainly made some preparation for it. But Allah was averse to their going forth, so He made them lag behind, (47) and they were told: "Stay behind with those that are staying behind."

(47) Allah held them back for He did not like that they should join Jihad unwillingly without any sincere intention for it. As they had no mind to make sacrifices to exalt the cause of Islam, and, therefore, would have taken part in it half-heartedly to escape the

taunts of the Muslims or to create mischief. This would have resulted in a greater evil, as has been stated explicitly in the next verse 48.

لَوْ خَرَجُوا فِيكُمْ مَّا زَادُوكُمْ اِلَّا خَبَالًا وَّلَاۡ اَوْضَعُوا خِلٰلَكُمْ يَبْغُوْنَكُمُ الْفِتْنَةَ وَفِيكُمْ سَمّٰعُوْنَ لَهُمْ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ عَلِيْمٌۢ بِالظّٰلِمِيْنَ ۴۷

(9-47) Had they gone forth with you, they would have only added to your trouble, and would have run about in your midst seeking to stir up sedition among you, whereas there are among you some who are prone to lend ears to them. Allah knows well the wrong-doers.

لَقَدِ ابْتَغَوُا الْفِتْنَةَ مِنْ قَبْلُ وَقَلَّبُوْا لَكَ الْاُمُوْرَ حَتّٰى جَآءَ الْحَقُّ وَظَهَرَ اَمْرُ اللّٰهِ وَهُمْ كٰرِهُوْنَ ۴۸

(9-48) Surely they sought even earlier to stir up sedition, and turned things upside down to frustrate you until the Truth came and the decree of Allah appeared, however hateful this may have been to them.

وَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ يَّقُوْلُ ائْذَنْ لِّيْ وَلَا تَفْتِنِّيْ ؕ اَلَا فِى الْفِتْنَةِ سَقَطُوْا ؕ وَاِنَّ جَهَنَّمَ لَمُحِيْطَةٌۢ بِالْكٰفِرِيْنَ ۴۹

(9-49) And among them is he who says: "Grant me leave to stay behind, and do not expose me to temptation." (48) Lo! They have already fallen into temptation. (49) Surely Hell encompasses the unbelievers. (50)

(48) Some of the hypocrites, who were requesting the Prophet (peace be upon him) to give them leave to stay behind on one pretext or the other, were so impudent that they were inventing excuses of a religious or moral nature for refraining from Jihad in the Way of Allah. One of these was Jad-bin-Qais, who, according to traditions came to the Prophet (peace be upon him) and said. “I am a lover of beauty and my people know that I am very weak in regard to women: therefore I am afraid to go forth lest the beauty of the Roman women should beguile me into sin. Therefore, “do not put me into trial.”

(49) Though they wanted exemption, they had already fallen as a prey to the temptations of telling lies, of double dealings and hypocrisy. They deluded themselves that they would be considered pious people, if they would put forward the fear of temptations to avoid Jihad, when, in fact; they had already fallen into the greatest

possible temptation of refraining from Jihad in the conflict between Islam and kufr.

(50) That is, “Such a show of piety has not taken them away from Hell; nay, on the other hand, the same thing has caused them to be entangled in the clutches of Hell.”

اِنۡ تُصِبۡکَ حَسَنَۃٌ تَسُؤۡہُمۡ ۟ وَاِنۡ تُصِبۡکَ مُصِیۡبَۃٌ یَّقُوۡلُوۡا قَدۡ اَخَذۡنَاۤ اَمۡرَنَا مِنۡ قَبۡلُ وَیَتَوَلَّوۡا وَّہُمۡ فَرِحُوۡنَ ﴿۵۰﴾

(9-50) If good fortune befalls you, it vexes them; and if an affliction befalls you, they turn away in jubilation and say: "We have taken due care of our affairs in good time."

قُلۡ لَّنۡ یُّصِیۡبَنَاۤ اِلَّا مَا کَتَبَ اللّٰہُ لَنَا ۚ ہُوَ مَوۡلٰىنَا ۚ وَعَلَی اللّٰہِ فَلۡیَتَوَکَّلِ الۡمُؤۡمِنُوۡنَ ﴿۵۱﴾

(9-51) Say: "Nothing will befall us except what Allah has decreed for us; He is our Protector." Let the believers, then, put all their trust in Allah. (51)

(51) In this passage a demarcation has been made between the attitudes of a man of the world and of a man of God. Whatever the man of the world does, he does it to please his own self. He exults if he attains some worldly ends but feels utterly dejected if he fails to attain them. Besides, he depends entirely on his material resources for his success and feels encouraged if these are favorable, but loses heart if these are unfavorable.

In contrast to the man of the world, whatever the man of God does, he does it to please Him and trusts in Him and not in his own powers nor in material resources. Therefore he is neither exultant over his success in the cause of Allah, nor loses heart by failure, for he believes that it is the will of God that is working in both the cases. Therefore he is neither disheartened by disasters nor is filled with conceit by successes. This is because he believes that both prosperity and adversity are from Allah and are nothing but a trial from Him. Therefore his only worry is to do his best to come out successful in His test. Besides, as there are no worldly ends before him, he does not measure his success or failure by the achievement or failure of his ends. On the other hand, the only object before him is to sacrifice his life and wealth in the Way of Allah, and he measures the success or failure of his efforts by the standard he achieves in the performance of this duty. Therefore if he is satisfied that he has done his best to perform this duty, he believes that he

has come out successful by the grace of God, though he might not have been able to accomplish anything from the worldly point of view; for he believes that his Allah in whose cause he has expended his life and wealth will not let go waste the reward of his efforts. As he does not depend on the material resources only, he is neither grieved if they are unfavorable, nor feels exultant when these are favorable. His entire trust is in God who is the controller of all the resources; therefore he goes on doing his duty even under the most unfavorable circumstances with the same courage and perseverance that is shown by the worldly people unfavorable circumstances alone. That is why Allah asked the Prophet (peace be upon him) to say to the hypocrites, “There is a basic difference between you and us in regard to the conduct of affairs. We believe that both the good and the bad are from Allah: therefore the apparent result does not make us happy or sad. Moreover, we depend on Allah in our affairs and you depend on material resources: so we are content and happy in all circumstances.”

قُلۡ هَلۡ تَرَبَّصُوۡنَ بِنَاۤ اِلَّاۤ اِحۡدَى الۡحُسۡنَيَيۡنِ ؕ وَنَحۡنُ نَتَرَبَّصُ بِكُمۡ اَنۡ يُّصِيۡبَكُمُ اللّٰهُ بِعَذَابٍ مِّنۡ عِنۡدِهٖۤ اَوۡ بِاَيۡدِيۡنَا ۚ فَتَرَبَّصُوۡۤا اِنَّا مَعَكُمۡ مُّتَرَبِّصُوۡنَ ﴿۵۲﴾

(9-52) Tell them: "What you await to befall upon us is nothing but one of the two good things! (52) And what we await for you is that Allah visit you with chastisement from Him or chastise you at our hands. So continue waiting; we too shall wait with you."

(52) This is the answer to those who, as usual, were not taking any part in the conflict between Islam and kufr, but were very wisely watching it from a distance to see whether the Prophet (peace be upon him) and his companions would return victorious from Tabuk or would be totally destroyed by the powerful Roman army. They were told that either of the two results, they were awaiting, would be good for the Muslims. For it was obvious that it would be a good thing if they won victory. But even if they were killed in the Way of Allah, it would be a success from their point of view, though not in the sight of the world, as the Muslims’ standard of measurement is different from that of the hypocrites and the like. A believer considers it his success if he sacrifices his life and wealth in the Way of Allah, irrespective of whether he succeeds in conquering some country, or in establishing a government or not. According to him the criterion of success or failure is whether he has extended or not all the powers of his body and soul, his head and his heart to elevate the word of Allah, though from the worldly point of view the result of his efforts might be nothing at all.

قُلْ اَ نْفِقُوْا طَوْعًا اَوْ كَرْهًا لَّنْ يُّتَقَبَّلَ مِنْكُمْ ۭ اِنَّكُمْ كُنْتُمْ قَوْمًا فٰسِقِيْنَ ۝٥٣

(9-53) Tell them: "Whether you spend your money willingly or unwillingly, (53) it shall not find acceptance (with Allah) for you are an evil-doing folk."

(53) This Ayat is a sharp retort to those hypocrites who desired exemption froth Jihad but, at the same time, wanted to make some monetary contributions in order to avoid the exposure of their hypocrisy, They said, “Please grant us leave from military service because we are unable to do this, but we are ready to make monetary contributions towards it.” To this Allah retorted, saying, “Whatever you may contribute, it shall not be accepted.”

وَمَا مَنَعَهُمْ اَنْ تُقْبَلَ مِنْهُمْ نَفَقٰتُهُمْ اِلَّآ اَنَّهُمْ كَفَرُوْا بِاللّٰهِ وَبِرَسُوْلِهٖ وَلَا يَاْتُوْنَ الصَّلٰوةَ اِلَّا وَهُمْ كُسَالٰى وَلَا يُنْفِقُوْنَ اِلَّا وَهُمْ كٰرِهُوْنَ ﴿٥٤﴾

(9-54) Nothing prevents that their expendings be accepted except that they disbelieve in Allah and His Messenger, and whenever they come to the Prayer they do so lazily, and whenever they spend they do so grudgingly.

فَلَا تُعْجِبْكَ اَمْوَالُهُمْ وَلَآ اَوْلَادُهُمْ ۭ اِنَّمَا يُرِيْدُ اللّٰهُ لِيُعَذِّبَهُمْ بِهَا فِي الْحَيٰوةِ الدُّنْيَا وَتَزْهَقَ اَنْفُسُهُمْ وَهُمْ كٰفِرُوْنَ ﴿٥٥﴾

(9-55) Let neither their riches nor their children excite your admiration. Allah only wants to chastise them through these things in the present life, (54) and to cause them to die while they are unbelievers. (55)

(54) “Allah only intends to punish them through them in the life of the world”, because of their great love for their children and wealth as these misled them to adopt the hypocritical attitude which, in turn, degraded them in the Muslim society. Consequently, in the Islamic system they would lose the respect, tire reputation and the prestige they enjoyed in the pre-Islamic society. On the contrary, even the Muslim slaves and the sons of slaves, the farmers and the shepherds, who proved the sincerity of their faith would win honor in the new system, and the big hereditary chiefs, who refrained from this because of their love of the world, would lose their fame, honor and prestige.

In order to illustrate the above, we cite an incident that happened during the caliphate of Umar (may Allah be pleased with him). Once some big chiefs of the Quraish including Suhail-bin-Amr and Harith-bin-Hisham, went to see caliph Umar and took their seats near him. Soon after this some humble people from among the Muhajirin and the Ansar came there. The caliph asked those chiefs to make room for them, and seated these humble people near his own seat. This went on for some time till these chiefs reached the remotest corner in the assembly. When they came out, Harith-bin-Hisham said to his companions, “You have noticed what a humiliating treatment has been meted out to us today!” Suhail-bin-Amr replied, “It is no fault of Umar but it is our own fault. When we were invited to Islam, we turned away from it, but these humble people accepted it and made sacrifices for it.” Then both of them returned to the meeting and said, “Today we have noticed your treatment and we feel that it is all due to our own shortcomings, but tell us if there is a way for us to make atonements for our past

failures”. The caliph did not give any reply but merely pointed towards the Roman territory, which meant that the only way of regaining their prestige was to expend their lives and wealth in doing Jihad there.

(55) “Their souls shall pass away while they are disbelievers” because of their hypocrisy, which would not let them attain sincere faith till they die. Thus after ruining their moral and spiritual lives in this world, they would leave it in the state of unbelief, which will ruin their lives in the Hereafter in a far worse way.

وَيَحْلِفُوْنَ بِاللّٰهِ اِنَّهُمْ لَمِنْكُمْ ؕ وَمَا هُمْ مِّنْكُمْ وَلٰكِنَّهُمْ قَوْمٌ يَّفْرَقُوْنَ ﴿٥٦﴾

(9-56) They swear by Allah that they are part of you whereas they are certainly not part of you. They are merely a people who dread you.

لَوْ يَجِدُوْنَ مَلْجَاً اَوْ مَغٰرٰتٍ اَوْ مُدَّخَلًا لَّوَلَّوْا اِلَيْهِ وَهُمْ يَجْمَحُوْنَ ﴿٥٧﴾

(9-57) If they could find any shelter or any cavern, or any retreat, they would turn around and rush headlong into it. (56)

(56) This was the condition of the hypocrites of Al- Madinah, the majority of whom were rich and old. We find from a list of the hypocrites, cited by Ibn-Kathir in Al- Badayah-wan-Nihayah, that only one of them was young and none was poor. These people had large properties and flourishing businesses in Al-Madinah. They were worldly-wise and their wide experience had taught them expediency, but their sense of self-interest had put them into a dilemma. When Islam reached Al-Madinah and a large majority of the population embraced it sincerely and enthusiastically, they found themselves in a very perplexing situation. They could not reject it outright for the majority of their own people, nay, their own sons and daughters, were filled with enthusiasm for Islam. If they had remained unbelievers, they would have lost their high position, their prestige and reputation and run the risk of a rebellion by the Muslims of their own household. On the other hand, if they sincerely embraced Islam, they would incur the danger of war, not only with the whole of Arabia but also with the adjoining nations and empires. Above all, self-interest had so blinded them that, in resolving the dilemma, they would not consider the problem from the point of view of truth and righteousness which by themselves are worthy of every sacrifice. Therefore they decided that the best thing for them was to profess Islam outwardly in order to make their positions, properties and businesses secure, but to adopt a hypocritical attitude towards

it so that they might be able to avoid the losses and perils inherent in the sincere acceptance of Islam.

This Verse 57 depicts the dilemma of the hypocrites, as if to say, “In reality these people are not Muslims, though they swear that they are Muslims like you; they profess Islam simply because they are afraid of losses they might incur, if they reject it outright. Then they dare not stay at Al- Madinah as non-Muslims for they would lose the high positions they enjoyed and might even have to cut off their connection with their wives and children; and if they decided to emigrate from Al-Madinah, they would have to abandon their properties and business. But they are not prepared for these sacrifices for they have no sincere attachment even to kufr. Therefore they are compelled against their beliefs by the force of circumstances to remain in Al-Madinah: they offer their Salat but regard this as forced labor: they pay the Zakat dues but as a penalty, for they are in their hearts averse to these things. To add to their calamities they are asked every now and then to make sacrifices of their lives and their wealth and to go forth for Jihad and to fight with one enemy or the other. They are so much afraid of these calamities that, in order to escape from them, they would run in frantic haste to take refuge in any hole, if they hoped that it would provide immunity against these calamities.

وَمِنۡهُم مَّن يَلۡمِزُكَ فِى الصَّدَقَٰتِ فَإِنۡ أُعۡطُواْ مِنۡهَا رَضُواْ وَإِن لَّمۡ يُعۡطَوۡاْ مِنۡهَآ إِذَا هُمۡ يَسۡخَطُونَ ٥٨

(9-58) (O Prophet), some of them find fault with you in the distribution of alms. If they are given something of it they are pleased, and if they are given nothing they are angry. (57)

(57) The people referred to were the hypocrites, who felt depressed on every occasion of the distribution of the Zakat collections, for they thought that they were not being given their due share. Then they would taunt the Prophet (peace be upon him) with making unfair distributions. This happened when the payment of Zakat was made an obligatory duty on all those Muslims whose possessions exceeded the prescribed limits. They were required to contribute from their agricultural products, animals, commercial commodities, minerals dug out of mines and the gold and silver they possessed, at different rates, varying from 2.5% to 20%, and all these were collected and spent in a systematic way from a central place.

As a result of this so much wealth flowed into the hands of a single person, the Prophet (peace be upon him), that it had no parallel in the whole territory of Arabia. Naturally the materialists looked at these things with greedy eyes and wanted to grab as much as possible out of this wealth. But their greed could not be satisfied, for the Prophet (peace be upon him), who had made the use of Zakat fund unlawful for his own person and for his own relatives, could not be expected to give anything out of it to anyone who did not deserve it. It is thus obvious that they found fault with the Prophet (peace be upon him) not because he was unfair in the distribution of the Zakat collections but because he did not allow the hypocrites to grab anything from these without any right to them. They, however, very cunningly hid their real grievance, and accused the Prophet (peace be upon him) of showing partiality and injustice in the distribution of the Zakat collection.

وَلَوْ اَنَّهُمْ رَضُوْا مَاۤ اٰتٰىهُمُ اللّٰهُ وَرَسُوْلُهٗ ۙ وَقَالُوْا حَسْبُنَا اللّٰهُ سَيُؤْتِيْنَا اللّٰهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهٖ وَرَسُوْلُهٗۤ اِنَّاۤ اِلَى اللّٰهِ رٰغِبُوْنَ ﴿۵۹﴾

(9-59) Would that they were content with what Allah and His Messenger gave them, [58] and were to say: "Allah suffices for us, and Allah will give us out of His bounty and so will His Messenger. [59] It is to Allah alone that we turn with hope." [60]

(58) That is, it would have been much better for them if they had been content with their share of the spoils which the Prophet (peace be upon him) gave them and what they earned by the grace of Allah and with the prosperity Allah had bestowed on them.

(59) It would have been good for them to adopt this attitude: “Sufficient is Allah for us,” for they ought to have known that they would receive their due shares besides the Zakat collections out of the wealth that would come to the state treasury, just as they were receiving their shares previously.

(60) “Indeed to Allah we are suppliants” means we give our attention to Allah and His grace and not to the world and its worthless riches and we desire to obey His will: we direct our expectations and hopes to Him and we are content with what He bestows on us.

اِنَّمَا الصَّدَقٰتُ لِلْفُقَرَآءِ وَالْمَسٰكِيْنِ وَالْعٰمِلِيْنَ عَلَيْهَا وَالْمُؤَلَّفَةِ قُلُوْبُهُمْ وَفِى الرِّقَابِ وَالْغٰرِمِيْنَ وَفِىْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ وَابْنِ السَّبِيْلِ ؕ فَرِيْضَةً مِّنَ اللّٰهِ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ عَلِيْمٌ حَكِيْمٌ ﴿۶۰﴾

(9-60) The alms are meant only for the poor [61] and the needy [62] and those who are in charge thereof, [63] those whose hearts are to be reconciled, [64] and to free those in bondage, [65] and to help those burdened with debt, [66] and for expenditure in the Way of Allah [67] and for the wayfarer. [68] This is an obligation from Allah. Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise.

(61) According to the Arabic usage, fuqara are all those people who depend on others for the necessities of life. The Arabic word fuqara is a general word for all those who are needy because of some physical defects, or old age, or temporarily out of living means, and can become self-supporting if they are helped like orphans, widows, the unemployed, etc.

(62) According to the Arabic usage, masakin are those indigent people who are in greater distress than the needy people usually are. The Prophet (peace be upon him) especially enjoined the Muslims to help such people as are unable to find the necessary means to satisfy their wants and are in very straitened circumstances, but are so self-respecting that they would not beg for anything, nor would others judge from their outward appearance that they were deserving people. According to a tradition miskin is one who cannot make ends meet, though his appearance does not show that he needs help nor does he beg for help. In short, he is a self-respecting person who has become needy.

(63) “Those employed to administer thereof” are those who collect Zakat dues, supervise the collections and keep accounts, and help in their distribution, irrespective of the fact whether or not they are needy or indigent; their remunerations shall be paid out of the Zakat funds. In this connection it should be noted well that the Prophet (peace be upon him) had declared the Zakat funds to be unlawful for himself and for the members of his own family (Bani Hashim). Accordingly, he never received any remuneration for collecting or distributing Zakat funds. As regards the other members of Bani Hashim, they were allowed to do this service without receiving any remuneration, but otherwise it is unlawful for them. On the contrary, the payment of the Zakat dues was obligatory on Bani Hashim if their possessions warranted this under the prescribed limits, but under no circumstances whatsoever were they allowed to accept anything out of Zakat collected from others.

There is, however, a difference of opinion as to whether they should accept anything out of the collections made from their own family or not. Imam Abu Yusuf opines that they are allowed to

accept these when they are needy or poor or wayfarers, but the majority of the jurists regard this also unlawful.
64. A portion of Zakat funds may also be given to win over to Islam those who might be engaged in anti-Islamic activities or to those in the camp of the unbelievers who might be brought to help the Muslims or to those newly converted Muslims, who might be inclined to revert to kufr if no monetary help was extended to them. It is permissible to award pensions to them or give them lump sums of money to make them helpers of Islam or submissive to it or at least to render them into harmless enemies. A portion of the spoils or other incomes may be spent on them and, if need be, also a portion of Zakat funds. In such cases, the condition of being needy or indigent or on a journey etc. is also waived; nay, they might be even rich people or chiefs who are otherwise not eligible for anything from Zakat funds.

All are agreed that during the time of the Prophet (peace be upon him) pensions and gifts were given under the category of winning over people, but there is a difference of opinion whether this category of expenditure was abolished or not after his death. Imam Abu Hanifah and his followers are of the opinion that it was abolished during the caliphate of Umar (may Allah be pleased with him), and now it is not lawful to spend anything under this category. Imam Shafi is of the opinion that something may be given to sinful Muslims under this category from Zakat funds but not to unbelievers, while other jurists are of the opinion that expenses under this category are lawful even now, if a need arises for them.

The Hanafis base their opinion on an incident that happened after the death of the Prophet (peace be upon him). Uyainah bin Hisan and Aqraa bin Habis came to Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him) and asked him to allot to them a certain piece of land. So he gave them a written order for this. They took it to some other highly placed companions for further confirmation and some of them endorsed this order. But when they took it to Umar (may Allah be pleased with him), he tore the paper into pieces before their very eyes, saying, it is true that the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to give something to win over your hearts because Islam was weak at that time, but now Allah has made Islam so strong that it does not stand in need of people like you. At this they went to Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him) and complained to him about it and taunted him, saying” Are you the caliph or Umar (may Allah be pleased with him)? But he took no notice of this, nor did any of the companions differ with Umar's (may Allah be pleased with him) opinion. The Hanafis conclude from this incident that when

the number and power of Muslims increased by the grace of Allah and they no longer stood in need of any support from such people; the reason for which expenses under this category were permitted in the first instance remained no longer there. Therefore the companions unanimously abolished expenditure under this head.

Imam Shafi says that there is nothing to prove that the Prophet (peace be upon him) ever spent anything out of Zakat funds under this category. All the incidents mentioned in the traditions show that whatever he spent for the purpose of winning over hearts to Islam, was spent out of the spoils of war and not out of Zakat funds.

In my opinion there is nothing to show that the expenses for winning over hearts have been made unlawful forever up to the Last Day. There is no doubt that the action taken by Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) was absolutely right, for if and when the Islamic state does not consider it necessary to spend anything under this head, Islam does not make it obligatory to spend something for winning hearts. On the other hand, if need for this arises at any time, it is authorized to incur expenses under this category for Allah has kept a provision for this. Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) and the other companions agreed only on this that there was no need to give anything for this purpose at that time because the circumstances did not warrant it. But there is no reason to conclude from this that the companions disallowed forever the expenses that were permitted by the Quran under certain circumstances for the good of Islam.

As regards the opinion of Imam Shafi, it appears to be correct in so far as it is not lawful to spend anything under this category out of Zakat funds, if these expenses can be met out of other funds. But if it is necessitated that something should be spent under this category out of Zakat funds, there is no reason why a differentiation should be made in this regard between sinful Muslims and unbelievers. For the Quran has not allocated the share because of the faith of the prospective recipients but because Islam required to win their hearts for its own good and because this could not be achieved except by giving them a portion of wealth. Therefore the Quran allows the Amir of the believers to spend a part of the Zakat funds to achieve this end, if, when and where the required conditions exist. The fact that the Prophet (peace be upon him) did not spend anything from the Zakat funds on unbelievers for this purpose does not mean that it is unlawful to do so, for he did not spend from this fund because there was enough money in other

funds for this purpose. Had it been unlawful to spend anything from Zakat funds on unbelievers, he would have explicitly forbidden it.

(65) A portion of Zakat funds may be spent for the ransoming of slaves in two ways. First, help may be given to a slave for the payment of the ransom money, if he enters into an agreement with his master that he will set him free, if the slave pays him a certain amount of money. The second way is that the Islamic government may itself pay the price of his freedom and set him at liberty. There is a consensus of opinion about the first way, but there is difference of opinion about the second way. Ali (may Allah be pleased with him), Said bin Jubair, Laith Thauri, Ibrahim Nakhi, Shaabi, and Muhammad bin Sirin, (Hanafis and Shafeis) consider this as unlawful while Ibn, Abbas, Hasan Basri, Malik, Ahmad and Abu Thaur consider this as lawful expenditure from this fund.

(66) Help may be given out of Zakat funds to such debtors as would be reduced to a state of poverty, if they paid off all their debts out of their own possessions, irrespective of the fact whether they are earning any money or not, whether they are indigent in the general sense or well off. According to some jurists, the only exceptions to this are those debtors who are spendthrifts or involve themselves in debts by spending money on wicked deeds. Help may be given to them only if and when they repent.

(67) “For Allah’s cause” is a general term which implies all those good works which please Allah. That is why some jurists are of the opinion that Zakat funds may be spent on every kind of good work. But the fact is, and the majority of the earliest Muslim scholars have opined, that here the ‘Allah’s cause’ stands for Jihad in the path of Allah, that is, the struggle to eradicate the systems based on kufr and to establish the Islamic system in their stead. Therefore the Zakat funds may be utilized to meet the expenses of the journeys the people make, or for procuring means of conveyance, equipment, weapons and other articles needed for Jihad, irrespective of the fact whether they are so well off or not as to need any help for personal requirements. Likewise help of a temporary or permanent nature may also be given to those people who devote all of their time and energies, temporarily or permanently, for this work

It should also be noted that there has arisen a misunderstanding regarding the “cause of Allah” for the early scholars usually use for Jihad the Arabic word as (ghazyah) which is synonymous with “fight”. They, therefore, are of the opinion that Zakat fund may only be used for the purpose of fighting. But Jihad in

the Way of Allah is a much more comprehensive term than mere fighting in the Way of Allah. Jihad applies to all those efforts that are made to degrade the word of kufr and to exalt the word of Allah and to establish the Islamic system of life, whether by propagating the message of Allah in the initial stage or by fighting in the final stage of the struggle.

(68) Help from Zakat funds may be given to a wayfarer on a journey even though he might be quite well off at home.

Some of the jurists are of the opinion that according to this verse only that wayfarer who does not undertake a journey for a sinful purpose may be helped out of Zakat funds. But no such condition has been laid down in the Quran or the Hadith to this effect. Besides this, we learn from the fundamental principles of Islam that the sins of a needy person would in no way prevent us from helping him. As a matter of fact, such a help may prove very useful in reforming sinful and depraved persons. For if they get a support in the time of need, it may reasonably be expected that they would turn towards purifying their souls.

وَمِنۡهُمُ الَّذِيۡنَ يُؤۡذُوۡنَ النَّبِىَّ وَيَقُوۡلُوۡنَ هُوَ اُذُنٌ ؕ قُلۡ اُذُنُ خَيۡرٍ لَّكُمۡ يُؤۡمِنُ بِاللّٰهِ وَيُؤۡمِنُ لِلۡمُؤۡمِنِيۡنَ وَرَحۡمَةٌ لِّلَّذِيۡنَ اٰمَنُوۡا مِنۡكُمۡ ؕ وَالَّذِيۡنَ يُؤۡذُوۡنَ رَسُوۡلَ اللّٰهِ لَهُمۡ عَذَابٌ اَلِيۡمٌ ۝٦١

(9-61) And of them there are some who distress the Prophet, saying: "He is all ears." (69) Tell them: "He listens for your good. (70) He believes in Allah and trusts the believers, (71) and is a mercy for those of you who believe. A painful punishment lies in store for those who cause distress to the Messenger of Allah."

(69) This was one of the charges which the hypocrites leveled against the Prophet (peace be upon him). As he used to listen to everyone and let him say freely whatever he had to say, they would find fault with him, saying, “He is a credulous person. Everyone can approach him freely and may say whatever he pleases, and he readily believes whatever he hears” Though it was a good thing that he heard everyone, the hypocrites intentionally spread it as a vice, so that the poor and humble Muslims should be kept away from coming near the Prophet (peace be upon him). The hypocrites did not like that these true believers should inform the Prophet (peace be upon him) about their plots, mischief and hostile talks. They resented it very much that the Prophet (peace be upon him) listened to and believed in the talk of these humble people against such “respectable” people as themselves.

(70) The answer to this charge implies two things. First, “Though the Prophet (peace be upon him) listens to everything, he attends only to that which is good and is for the welfare of the community, for he is not the one who would listen to or encourage mischievous things.” Secondly, “It is good for yourselves that he listens patiently to everyone; otherwise he would not have allowed you to put forward lame excuses for your negligence from the struggle in the Way of Allah. Had he not been forbearing, he would not have paid attention to your false professions of faith and hypocritical expressions of good wishes for Islam, but would have taken you to task for your mischief and made it difficult for you to live at Al-Madinah. It is thus obvious that it is good for you that he listens to everyone.

(71) That is, you are wrong that he listens to everyone. He puts his trust only in the true believers. Accordingly, he believed only in those things about you that were conveyed to him by good and trustworthy people, who were neither liars nor tale-bearers. Therefore, whatever they said about you was true and should have been taken as true.

يَحْلِفُوْنَ بِاللّٰهِ لَكُمْ لِيُرْضُوْكُمْ وَاللّٰهُ وَرَسُوْلُهٗٓ اَحَقُّ اَنْ يُّرْضُوْهُ اِنْ كَانُوْا مُؤْمِنِيْنَ ﴿٦٢﴾

(9-62) They swear by Allah to please you, while it is Allah and His Messenger whose pleasure they should seek if they truly believe.

اَلَمْ يَعْلَمُوْٓا اَنَّهٗ مَنْ يُّحَادِدِ اللّٰهَ وَرَسُوْلَهٗ فَاَنَّ لَهٗ نَارَ جَهَنَّمَ خٰلِدًا فِيْهَا ۭ ذٰلِكَ الْخِزْيُ الْعَظِيْمُ ﴿٦٣﴾

(9-63) Are they not aware that Hell Fire awaits whosoever opposes Allah and His Messenger, and in it he shall abide? That surely is the great humiliation.

يَحْذَرُ الْمُنٰفِقُوْنَ اَنْ تُنَزَّلَ عَلَيْهِمْ سُوْرَةٌ تُنَبِّئُهُمْ بِمَا فِيْ قُلُوْبِهِمْ ۭ قُلِ اسْتَهْزِءُوْا ۚ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ مُخْرِجٌ مَّا تَحْذَرُوْنَ ﴿٦٤﴾

(9-64) The hypocrites are afraid lest a surah should be revealed concerning them intimating to the believers what lay hidden in their hearts. (72) Tell them (O Prophet): "Continue your mockery if you will. Allah will surely bring to light all that whose disclosure you dread."

(72) The hypocrites were afraid that their secret plans would be disclosed in the Quran to their great discomfort. Though they did not believe that the Prophet (peace be upon him) was a Messenger of Allah, they were convinced from their experience of the last nine years or so that he possessed some supernatural powers by which he learned their hidden secrets, and revealed these through the Quran (which according to them was written by him).

وَلَئِن سَأَلْتَهُمْ لَيَقُولُنَّ إِنَّمَا كُنَّا نَخُوضُ وَنَلْعَبُ ۚ قُلْ أَبِاللَّهِ وَآيَاتِهِ وَرَسُولِهِ كُنتُمْ تَسْتَهْزِئُونَ ﴿٦٥﴾

(9-65) Should you question them what they were talking about, they would certainly say: "We were merely jesting and being playful." (73) Tell them: "Was it Allah and His revelation and His Messenger that you were mocking?"

(73) This refers to the hypocrites who used to make fun of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and the true Muslims in their secret meetings when they were making preparations for the expedition to Tabuk. In this way, they used to discourage those Muslims who sincerely and honestly intended to go forth for Jihad. We learn many things in this connection from the traditions. For instance, in one of their meetings, when the hypocrites were having a gossip, one of them remarked, “I say: Do you think that the Romans are no better than the Arabs? You will see that in the near future these brave men will be bound with ropes.” Another responded to this, “What a fun it would be if after this each one of them is lashed with a hundred stripes.” Still another, ridiculing the preparations by the Prophet (peace be upon him) for the expedition, remarked, “Look at this man, and his preparations. He intends to go forth to conquer the forts in Syria and the Roman Empire.”

لَا تَعْتَذِرُوْا قَدْ كَفَرْتُمْ بَعْدَ اِيْمَانِكُمْ ۭ اِنْ نَّعْفُ عَنْ طَاۗىِٕفَةٍ مِّنْكُمْ نُعَذِّبْ طَاۗىِٕفَةًۢ بِاَنَّهُمْ كَانُوْا مُجْرِمِيْنَ ۶۶

(9-66) Now, make no excuses. The truth is, you have fallen into unbelief after having believed. Even if We were to forgive some of you, We will surely chastise others because they are guilty. (74)

(74) That is, “Those foolish buffoons, who take interest in such conversations and mock even at serious things because there is nothing serious in the world for them, may be pardoned. But there are others who mock at these serious things deliberately with evil intentions, because they consider the Messenger (peace be upon him) and the way taught by him as ridiculous in spite of their professions of faith. As their real object is to discourage the believers from making preparations for Jihad, they are criminals and not buffoons; therefore they shall not be pardoned at all.”

اَلْمُنٰفِقُوْنَ وَالْمُنٰفِقٰتُ بَعْضُهُمْ مِّنْۢ بَعْضٍ ۘ يَاْمُرُوْنَ بِالْمُنْكَرِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمَعْرُوْفِ وَيَقْبِضُوْنَ اَيْدِيَهُمْ ۭ نَسُوا اللّٰهَ فَنَسِيَهُمْ ۭ اِنَّ الْمُنٰفِقِيْنَ هُمُ الْفٰسِقُوْنَ ۶۷

(9-67) The hypocrites, be they men or women, are all alike. They enjoin what is evil, and forbid what is good, and withhold their hands from doing good. (75) They forgot Allah, so Allah also forgot them. Surely the hypocrites are wicked.

(75) These are the common characteristics of all hypocrites. All of them are interested in evil and inimical to good. If someone undertakes to do an evil thing, they would dedicate all their sympathies, counsels, encouragements, contributions, good wishes, praises, and their approvals to such a one. They would join hands to accomplish that evil thing and persuade others to take part in it and encourage others in every way. Moreover, they would show in every way their hearty pleasure if they perceived that the evil thing was progressing satisfactorily. On the other hand, if someone undertakes to do a good thing, they are shocked to bear the very news of it for it pains their hearts; nay, they do not even like that such a thing should be undertaken at all. Then, if they see someone coming forward to help it, they feel very uncomfortable and try their best to hinder him from it, and if he does not give it up, they would wish that he should fail in it. Then all of them have this common characteristic that they do not spend anything at all for good ends irrespective of the fact whether they be otherwise parsimonious or generous. At any rate, their wealth is either for hoarding or for evil

deeds. As a matter of fact, they would spend large sums on evil works generously but would not be willing to spend a farthing for good things.

وَعَدَ اللّٰهُ الْمُنٰفِقِيْنَ وَالْمُنٰفِقٰتِ وَالْكُفَّارَ نَارَ جَهَنَّمَ خٰلِدِيْنَ فِيْهَا ؕ هِيَ حَسْبُهُمْ ۚ وَلَعَنَهُمُ اللّٰهُ ۚ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ مُّقِيْمٌ ﴿٦٨﴾

(9-68) Allah has promised Hell-Fire to the hypocrites, both men and women, and to the unbelievers. They shall abide in it: a sufficient recompense for them. Allah has cursed them, and theirs is a lasting torment.

كَالَّذِيْنَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ كَانُوْۤا اَشَدَّ مِنْكُمْ قُوَّةً وَّاَكْثَرَ اَمْوَالًا وَّاَوْلَادًا ؕ فَاسْتَمْتَعُوْا بِخَلَاقِهِمْ فَاسْتَمْتَعْتُمْ بِخَلَاقِكُمْ كَمَا اسْتَمْتَعَ الَّذِيْنَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ بِخَلَاقِهِمْ وَخُضْتُمْ كَالَّذِيْ خَاضُوْا ؕ اُولٰٓئِكَ حَبِطَتْ اَعْمَالُهُمْ فِى الدُّنْيَا وَالْاٰخِرَةِ ۚ وَاُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الْخٰسِرُوْنَ ﴿٦٩﴾

(9-69) Your ways are like the ways of those who have gone before you. (76) They were mightier than you in power, and more abundant in riches and children. They enjoyed their lot for a while as you have enjoyed your lot, and you also engaged in idle talk as they did. Their works have come to naught in this world, and in the Hereafter they are surely the losers.

(76) In the preceding verse, they were being mentioned in the third person, but here they are being addressed directly in the second person.

اَلَمْ يَاْتِهِمْ نَبَاُ الَّذِيْنَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ قَوْمِ نُوْحٍ وَّعَادٍ وَّثَمُوْدَ ۙ وَقَوْمِ اِبْرٰهِيْمَ وَاَصْحٰبِ مَدْيَنَ وَالْمُؤْتَفِكٰتِ ؕ اَتَتْهُمْ رُسُلُهُمْ بِالْبَيِّنٰتِ ۚ فَمَا كَانَ اللّٰهُ لِيَظْلِمَهُمْ وَلٰكِنْ كَانُوْۤا اَنْفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُوْنَ ﴿٧٠﴾

(9-70) Have they not heard the accounts of those who came before them (77) - of the people of Noah and 'Ad and Thamud, and the people of Abraham and the dwellers of Madyan (Midian), and the cities that were overturned? (78) Their Messengers came to them with Clear Signs. Then, it was not Allah Who caused them any wrong; they rather wronged themselves. (79)

(77) Again they are being mentioned in the third person.

(78) These were the people of Lot.

(79) “They used to wrong themselves” for they were themselves responsible for their destruction. Allah had no enmity with them and

had no desire to destroy them. As a matter of fact, they themselves adopted the way of life that led to destruction, whereas Allah had sent His Messengers to them and afforded them the opportunities of thinking, understanding, and reforming. His Messengers admonished and warned them of the consequences of treading wrong paths, and presented very clearly before them the way that leads to success, and also the ways that lead to destruction. But when they did not benefit from the opportunities that were offered to them to mend their ways, and persisted in treading the ways that led to destruction, they inevitably met with the end for which they were heading. And this horrible end was not due to Allah's will to be unjust to them but due to their own evil doings."

وَالْمُؤْمِنُوْنَ وَالْمُؤْمِنٰتُ بَعْضُهُمْ اَوْلِيَآءُ بَعْضٍ ۘ يَاْمُرُوْنَ بِالْمَعْرُوْفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَيُقِيْمُوْنَ الصَّلٰوةَ وَيُؤْتُوْنَ الزَّكٰوةَ وَيُطِيْعُوْنَ اللّٰهَ وَرَسُوْلَهٗ ۭ اُولٰۗىِٕكَ سَيَرْحَمُهُمُ اللّٰهُ ۭ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ عَزِيْزٌ حَكِيْمٌ ۝٧١

(9-71) The believers, both men and women, are allies of one another. They enjoin good, forbid evil, establish Prayer, pay Zakah, and obey Allah and His Messenger. (80) Surely Allah will show mercy to them. Allah is All-Mighty, All-Wise.

(80) The contrast between the characteristics of the hypocrites (Ayat 67) and of the true believers (Ayat 71) clearly shows that the two are entirely different from each other, in spite of their outwardly similar profession of faith in Islam and obedience to it. The difference lies in their morals, conducts, habits, attitudes and ways of thinking. On the one hand, are the hypocrites whose tongues are never tired of professing faith in Islam, but who are void of sincere faith, and whose conduct belies their professions. They are, as it were, like bottles which have labels of musk, but contain cow-dung which may easily be recognized from its appearance and unpleasant odor. On the other hand, are the true believers, who are like those bottles which contain musk which may be tested in any way by its appearance, its smell and other characteristics to be the musk. Likewise, though the outward label of Islam apparently makes both of them one community of Muslims, the real characteristics of the hypocritical Muslims are so different from those of the true Muslims that they have, in fact, become two different communities. The hypocritical Muslims, men and women, form a separate community with those who have similar characteristics. They all are neglectful of Allah, take interest in evil things and deviate from all that is good and never cooperate with true believers. In short, they are allies to one another and practically dissociate themselves from true believers and form a group of their own. In contrast to them, the

true believers, men and women, have practically become one community. All of them take interest in what is good, and abhor what is evil. They remember Allah day and night and cannot think of life without the constant remembrance of Allah. They are very generous in spending in the Way of Allah, and obey Him and His Messenger (peace be upon him) without any mental reservations. These common characteristics have dissociated them from the hypocrites and united them in one community and made them allies to one another.

وَعَدَ اللّٰهُ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ وَالْمُؤْمِنٰتِ جَنّٰتٍ تَجْرِيْ مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْاَنْهٰرُ خٰلِدِيْنَ فِيْهَا وَمَسٰكِنَ طَيِّبَةً فِيْ جَنّٰتِ عَدْنٍ ۭ وَرِضْوَانٌ مِّنَ اللّٰهِ اَكْبَرُ ۭ ذٰلِكَ هُوَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيْمُ ۝٧٢

(9-72) Allah has promised the believing men and believing women Gardens beneath which rivers flow. They shall abide in it. There are delightful dwelling places for them in the Gardens of Eternity. They shall, above all, enjoy the good pleasure of Allah. That is the great achievement.

يٰٓاَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ جَاهِدِ الْكُفَّارَ وَالْمُنٰفِقِيْنَ وَاغْلُظْ عَلَيْهِمْ ۭ وَمَاْوٰىهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ ۭ وَبِئْسَ الْمَصِيْرُ ۝٧٣

(9-73) O Prophet! (81) Strive against the unbelievers and the hypocrites, and be severe to them. (82) Hell shall be their abode; what an evil destination!

(81) From here begins the third discourse that was sent down after the expedition to Tabuk.

(82) This command enunciated the change of policy towards the hypocrites. Up to this time, leniency was being shown to them for two reasons. First, the Muslims had not as yet become so powerful as to take the risk of an internal conflict in addition to the one with the external enemies. The other reason was to give enough respite to those people who were involved in doubts and suspicions so that they could get sufficient time for attaining to faith and belief. But now the time had come for a change of policy. The whole of Arabia had been subdued and a bitter conflict with the external enemies was about to start; therefore it was required that these internal enemies should be crushed down so that they should not be able to conspire with the external enemies to stir up any internal danger to the Muslims. And now it had become possible to crush them. As regards to the second reason, these hypocrites had been given respite for a period of nine years to observe, to consider and test the right way, and they could have availed of it, if they had any good in

them. So there was no reason why any more leniency should be shown to them. Therefore, Allah enjoined the Muslims to treat the hypocrites on one and the same level with the disbelievers and start Jihad against them, and to give up the policy of leniency they had adopted towards them and adopt a fine and stern policy instead.

In this connection, it should also be noted that this verse does not enjoin the Muslims to fight with the hypocrites. It merely meant to end the policy of leniency that had hitherto been adopted towards them. This verse enjoined that they were no more to be considered a part and parcel of the Muslim community, nor were they to be allowed to take part in the management of its affairs, nor consulted about any matter, so that they might not be able to spread the poison of hypocrisy. This changed policy required that the true believers should expose all those, who adopted a hypocritical attitude and conduct and showed in any way that they were not sincere allies to Allah, His Messenger (peace be upon him) and the true Muslims. Each and every one of such hypocrites should be openly criticized and reproved so that there should remain for them no more place of honor and trust in the Muslim society. They should be socially boycotted and kept away from the consultations of the community. Their evidence in the courts of law should be regarded as untrustworthy. The doors of offices and positions of trust should be closed against them and they should be held in contempt in the social meetings. In short, every Muslim should show by his behavior to such a one that there was no place of honor or respect or trust for a hypocrite in the Muslim society. Besides this, if any one of them was found to be guilty of treachery, there should be no connivance at his crime, nor should he be pardoned but openly tried in a court of law and should be duly punished.

This command was urgently needed at the time it came. It was obvious that in order to save the Muslim community from fall and degradation, it was essential to purge it of all the internal dangers to its solidarity. A community which nourishes hypocrites and traitors and allows the internal enemies to flourish with honor and security will inevitably be doomed to moral degradation and ultimate destruction. Hypocrisy is a plague and a hypocrite is the rat that carries and spreads its germs. Therefore to allow him the freedom of movement in the society is to expose the whole population to the danger of hypocrisy. Likewise, to give a place of honor and prestige to a hypocrite is to encourage many others in hypocrisy and treachery, for this shows that it is not sincerity, true faith, and its welfare that count in it. One may flourish and prosper in it even if one verbally professes to be a Muslim and at the same

time indulges in dishonesty and treachery. The Prophet (peace be upon him) has expressed the same thing in a pithy saying. He said, “Whoso honors and respects the inventor of new practices which are un-Islamic, indeed helps to demolish the very structure of Islam.”

يَحْلِفُوْنَ بِاللّٰهِ مَا قَالُوْا ۗ وَلَقَدْ قَالُوْا كَلِمَةَ الْكُفْرِ وَكَفَرُوْا بَعْدَ اِسْلَامِهِمْ وَهَمُّوْا بِمَا لَمْ يَنَالُوْا ۚ وَمَا نَقَمُوْٓا اِلَّآ اَنْ اَغْنٰىهُمُ اللّٰهُ وَرَسُوْلُهٗ مِنْ فَضْلِهٖ ۚ فَاِنْ يَّتُوْبُوْا يَكُ خَيْرًا لَّهُمْ ۚ وَاِنْ يَّتَوَلَّوْا يُعَذِّبْهُمُ اللّٰهُ عَذَابًا اَلِيْمًا فِى الدُّنْيَا وَالْاٰخِرَةِ ۚ وَمَا لَهُمْ فِى الْاَرْضِ مِنْ وَّلِيٍّ وَّلَا نَصِيْرٍ ﴿٧٤﴾

(9-74) They swear by Allah that they said nothing blasphemous whereas they indeed blasphemed, (83) and fell into unbelief after believing, and also had evil designs which they could not carry into effect. (84) They are spiteful against Muslims for no other reason than that Allah and His Messenger have enriched them through His bounty! (85) So, if they repent, it will be to their own good. But if they turn away, Allah will sternly punish them in this world and in the Hereafter. None in the world will be able to protect or help them.

(83) We cannot say with certainty what that “word of disbelief” was which they had uttered. There are, however, traditions that mention several things of unbelief which were uttered by the hypocrites during that time. For instance, it is related that a hypocrite, while he was talking to a young Muslim, a near relative of his, said, “If all that this man, referring to the Prophet (peace be upon him), is saying be true, then we are worse than donkeys.” Another tradition relates that when, during the expedition to Tabuk, one of the she-camels of the Prophet (peace be upon him) went astray and the Muslims were moving about in search of it, a party of the hypocrites made a good deal of fun of this, saying to one another, “Just consider the prophethood of this man. He tells news of heavens but cannot tell where his she-camel is.”

(84) This is a reference to the plots which the hypocrites had made during the Tabuk expedition. On the return journey they conspired to push the Prophet (peace be upon him) down into some ravine, while he would be passing over some hill at night. The Prophet (peace be upon him) got wind of the plot and ordered that the army should take the longer route through the valley round the hills, while he himself along with Ammar bin Yasir and Huzaifah bin-Yaman would make the short route over the hill. While they were on the way, suddenly they discovered that a dozen of the hypocrites, with covered faces, were following them. At this Huzaifah (may Allah be pleased with him) turned towards them so that he may drive

away their camels but they were terrified when they saw him coming towards them and took to flight lest they should be recognized.

The other plot was to declare Abdullah bin Ubayy as king at Al-Madinah as soon as they should hear some bad news about the Muslim army, because according to their expectations, the Prophet (peace be upon him) and his faithful companions could never fare well against the armies of the great Roman Empire.

(85) This is an insinuation to put to shame by an indirect suggestion the hypocrites of Al-Madinah. This refereed to the prosperity of Al-Madinah and its peoples, for Al- Madinah was a small town before the migration of the Prophet (peace be upon him) to it, and its two clans Aus and Khazraj did not hold any high position in regards to wealth or prestige. But within the short period of nine years or so, this small town became the capital of Arabia because of the residence of the Prophet (peace be upon him), and the sacrifices of the Ansar, the true Muslims. As a result of which, the former peasants Aus and Khazraj of Al- Madinah became the great ones of the Islamic state, and wealth began to flow into this central city on account of spoils of war and increased commercial activity. The hypocrites were rebuked in this verse that, instead of being grateful to the Prophet (peace be upon him), they showed anger and spite against him for no other reason than that he had brought forth prosperity among them.

وَمِنْهُم مَّنْ عٰهَدَ اللّٰهَ لَئِنْ اٰتٰنَا مِنْ فَضْلِهٖ لَنَصَّدَّقَنَّ وَلَنَكُوْنَنَّ مِنَ الصّٰلِحِيْنَ ﴿٧٥﴾

(9-75) Some of them made a covenant with Allah: "If Allah gives us out of His bounty, we will give alms and act righteously."

فَلَمَّآ اٰتٰىهُمْ مِّنْ فَضْلِهٖ بَخِلُوْا بِهٖ وَتَوَلَّوْا وَّهُمْ مُّعْرِضُوْنَ ﴿٧٦﴾

(9-76) Then, when He gave them out of His bounty, they grew niggardly and turned their backs (upon their covenant). (86)

(86) This is an instance of their ingratitude for which the hypocrites were rebuked in Ayat 74.
They broke their covenant with Allah which enjoined them to spend money in charity, if Allah enriched them by His bounty. This shows that they were confirmed criminals and they did not care in the least

for the agreements they made, and were niggardly and had no moral code to observe.

فَاَعْقَبَهُمْ نِفَاقًا فِیْ قُلُوْبِهِمْ اِلٰی یَوْمِ یَلْقَوْنَهٗ بِمَاۤ اَخْلَفُوا اللّٰهَ مَا وَعَدُوْهُ وَبِمَا كَانُوْا یَكْذِبُوْنَ ﴿۷۷﴾

(9-77) So He caused hypocrisy to take root in their hearts and to remain therein until the Day they meet Him because they broke their promise with Allah and because they lied.

اَلَمْ يَعْلَمُوۡۤا اَنَّ اللّٰهَ يَعْلَمُ سِرَّهُمْ وَنَجْوٰىهُمْ وَ اَنَّ اللّٰهَ عَلَّامُ الْغُيُوۡبِ ۷۸

(9-78) Are they not aware that Allah knows what they conceal and what they secretly discuss, and that Allah has full knowledge even of all that is beyond the reach of perception.

اَلَّذِيۡنَ يَلْمِزُوۡنَ الْمُطَّوِّعِيۡنَ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِيۡنَ فِى الصَّدَقٰتِ وَالَّذِيۡنَ لَا يَجِدُوۡنَ اِلَّا جُهْدَهُمْ فَيَسْخَرُوۡنَ مِنْهُمْ ؕ سَخِرَ اللّٰهُ مِنْهُمْ ۫ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ اَلِيۡمٌ ۷۹

(9-79) He also knows (the rich that are niggardly) who taunt the believers that voluntarily give alms, they scoff at those who have nothing to give except what they earn through their hard toil. (87) Allah scoffs at them in return. A grievous chastisement awaits them.

(87) This refers to the mean conduct which the hypocrites evinced on the occasion of the appeal of the Prophet (peace be upon him) for contributions towards the Tabuk expedition. The well-to-do hypocrites did not themselves make any contributions, but when the sincere Muslims came forward with generous contributions according to their means, they began to deride them. If a well-to-do Muslim made a handsome contribution, they would at once accuse him to be guilty of a showoff. On the other hand, if a poor Muslim contributed a paltry sum which he could hardly spare after sacrificing some of the barest necessities of his family, or contributing the small earnings obtained by hard work, they would at once ridicule, saying, “Lo! Here is the farthing that will help conquer the forts of the Roman Empire!”

اِسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ اَوْ لَا تَسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ ۚ اِنْ تَسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ سَبْعِيۡنَ مَرَّةً فَلَنْ يَّغْفِرَ اللّٰهُ لَهُمْ ؕ ذٰلِكَ بِاَنَّهُمْ كَفَرُوۡا بِاللّٰهِ وَرَسُوۡلِهٖ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ لَا يَهْدِى الْقَوْمَ الْفٰسِقِيۡنَ ۸۰

(9-80) (O Prophet), it is all the same whether or not you ask for their forgiveness. Even if you were to ask forgiveness for them seventy times, Allah shall not forgive them. That is because they disbelieved in Allah and His Messenger; and Allah does not bestow His Guidance on such evil-doing folk.

فَرِحَ الْمُخَلَّفُوۡنَ بِمَقْعَدِهِمْ خِلٰفَ رَسُوۡلِ اللّٰهِ وَكَرِهُوۡۤا اَنْ يُّجَاهِدُوۡا بِاَمْوَالِهِمْ وَاَنْفُسِهِمْ فِىْ سَبِيۡلِ اللّٰهِ وَقَالُوۡا لَا تَنْفِرُوۡا فِى الْحَرِّ ؕ قُلْ نَارُ جَهَنَّمَ اَشَدُّ حَرًّا ؕ لَوْ كَانُوۡا يَفْقَهُوۡنَ ۸۱

(9-81) Those who were allowed to stay behind rejoiced at remaining behind and not accompanying the Messenger of Allah.

They were averse to striving in the Way of Allah with their belongings and their lives and told others: "Do not go forth in this fierce heat." Tell them: "The Hell is far fiercer in heat." Would that they understand!

فَلْيَضْحَكُوا قَلِيْلًا وَّلْيَبْكُوا كَثِيْرًا جَزَآءًۢ بِمَا كَانُوْا يَكْسِبُوْنَ ﴿٨٢﴾

(9-82) Let them, then, laugh little, and weep much at the contemplation of the punishment for the evil they have committed.

فَاِنْ رَّجَعَكَ اللّٰهُ اِلٰى طَآئِفَةٍ مِّنْهُمْ فَاسْتَاْذَنُوْكَ لِلْخُرُوْجِ فَقُلْ لَّنْ تَخْرُجُوْا مَعِيَ اَبَدًا وَّلَنْ تُقَاتِلُوْا مَعِيَ عَدُوًّا ؕ اِنَّكُمْ رَضِيْتُمْ بِالْقُعُوْدِ اَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ فَاقْعُدُوْا مَعَ الْخٰلِفِيْنَ ﴿٨٣﴾

(9-83) Then if Allah brings you face to face with a party of them, and they ask your leave to go forth (to fight in the Way of Allah), tell them: "You shall not go forth with me, and shall never fight against any enemy along with me. You were well-pleased to remain at home the first time, so now continue to remain with those who have stayed behind."

وَلَا تُصَلِّ عَلٰٓى اَحَدٍ مِّنْهُمْ مَّاتَ اَبَدًا وَّلَا تَقُمْ عَلٰى قَبْرِهٖ ؕ اِنَّهُمْ كَفَرُوْا بِاللّٰهِ وَرَسُوْلِهٖ وَمَاتُوْا وَهُمْ فٰسِقُوْنَ ﴿٨٤﴾

(9-84) Do not ever pray over any of them who dies, nor stand over his grave. They disbelieved in Allah and His Messenger and died in iniquity. (88)

(88) This verse was sent down to prevent the Prophet (peace be upon him) from saying funeral prayers for Abdullah bin Ubayy, the ringleader of the hypocrites, who died a short while after the Tabuk expedition. His son Abdullah who was a sincere Muslim called on the Prophet (peace be upon him) and requested him to give his shirt for his father’s shroud. The Prophet (peace be upon him) very generously granted his request. Then he begged the Prophet (peace be upon him) to lead his father’s funeral prayer. The Prophet (peace be upon him) agreed to this also but Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) very respectfully requested him repeatedly not to do so, saying, “O Prophet of Allah! will you say funeral prayer for a person who was guilty of such and such crimes and sins.” The Prophet (peace be upon him), who was a blessing both for friends and for foes, got ready to say funeral prayer even for that man who was a deadly enemy of Islam. At last when he stood up to lead the funeral prayer, this verse was sent down to prevent him from this by a direct command from God, in accordance with the changed policy declared

in Ayat 73 which forbade to do anything that might encourage the hypocrites among the Muslims.

The above incident led to the formulation of the regulation that the leaders and prominent people from among the Muslims should neither lead, nor offer the funeral prayers of the sinners against Islam, or for those notorious for their disobedience to Islam. After this, whenever a request was made to the Prophet (peace be upon him) for a funeral prayer, he would first inquire about the conduct of the deceased person. If he came to know that he was a bad person, he would say to his people, “You may perform his burial just as you like”.

وَلَا تُعْجِبْكَ اَمْوٰلُهُمْ وَ اَوْلٰدُهُمْ ؕ اِنَّمَا يُرِيْدُ اللّٰهُ لِيُعَذِّبَهُمْ بِهَا فِى الدُّنْيَا وَ تَزْهَقَ اَنْفُسُهُمْ وَ هُمْ كٰفِرُوْنَ ۝۸۵

(9-85) Let not their riches or their children excite your admiration. Through these Allah seeks to chastise them in this world, and that their lives will depart them while they are unbelievers.

وَ اِذَآ اُنْزِلَتْ سُوْرَةٌ اَنْ اٰمِنُوْا بِاللّٰهِ وَجٰهِدُوْا مَعَ رَسُوْلِهِ اسْتَاْذَنَكَ اُولُوا الطَّوْلِ مِنْهُمْ وَقَالُوْا ذَرْنَا نَكُنْ مَّعَ الْقٰعِدِيْنَ ۝۸۶

(9-86) And whenever any surah is revealed enjoining: "Believe in Allah and strive (in His Way) along with His Messenger," the affluent among them ask you to excuse them, saying: "Leave us with those who will sit back at home."

رَضُوْا بِاَنْ يَّكُوْنُوْا مَعَ الْخَوَالِفِ وَطُبِعَ عَلٰى قُلُوْبِهِمْ فَهُمْ لَا يَفْقَهُوْنَ ۝۸۷

(9-87) They were content to stay behind with the womenfolk. Their hearts were sealed, leaving them bereft of understanding. (89)

(89) “They do not understand” for they deliberately and intentionally chose the shameful way of staying at home with women, when they were required to go forth for Jihad, though they were healthy, physically fit and well-to-do, and professed Islam. Therefore, according to the divine law of nature, a seal was set upon their hearts and they were bereft of those noble feelings which make one feel ashamed of adopting such a disgraceful conduct.

لٰكِنِ الرَّسُوْلُ وَالَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا مَعَهٗ جٰهَدُوْا بِاَمْوَالِهِمْ وَاَنْفُسِهِمْ ؕ وَاُولٰٓئِكَ لَهُمُ الْخَيْرٰتُ وَاُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُوْنَ ۝۸۸

(9-88) But the Messenger and those who shared his faith strove with their belongings and their lives. It is they who shall have all kinds of good. It is they who shall prosper.

اَعَدَّ اللّٰ لَ ُ مْ جَنّٰتٍ تَجْرِ ۪ ہ تَحْتَهَ ا الْاَنْ ۪ رٰ خٰلِدِ ۪ نَ فِ ۪ ا ؕ ذٰلِکَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِ ۪ یْمُ ۸۹٪

(9-89) Allah has prepared for them Gardens beneath which rivers flow. There shall they abide. That is the supreme triumph.

وَجَآءَ الْمُعَذِّرُ ۪ وْ نَ مِنَ الْاَعْرَابِ لِیُؤْذَنَ لَ ُ مْ وَقَعَدَ الَّذِ ۪ یْنَ کَذَبُوا اللّٰ وَرَسُوْلَ ؕ
سَیُصِ ۪ یْبُ الَّذِ ۪ یْنَ کَفَرُوْا مِنْ ُ هُ مْ عَذَابٌ اَلِ ۪ یْمٌ ۹۰

(9-90) Many of the bedouin Arabs [90] came with excuses, seeking leave to stay behind. Thus those who were false to Allah and His Messenger in their covenant remained behind. A painful chastisement shall befall those of them that disbelieved. [91]

(90) Here the word Bedouins refers to those Arabs who lived in the desert near Al-Madinah.

(91) The hypocritical profession of Islam has been called the way of unbelief, because that profession of faith which lacks practical proof, surrender, sincerity and obedience is in fact unbelief. As such persons prefer their own interests and worldly desires to Allah and His Way, they shall be dealt with by Allah as unbelievers and rebels, even if they could not be legally treated as such in this world but were considered Muslims due to their profession of faith. This is because in the life of this world, the Islamic law treats as unbelievers only such hypocrites as are guilty of open unbelief, rebellion, treachery, or infidelity. That is why there are many cases of hypocrisy that do not come under kufr in the Islamic shariah. However, this does not mean that if one escaped the penalty according to the Islamic code, one will escape punishment according to the divine judgment also.

لَ ۪ یْسَ عَلَی الضُّعَفَآءِ وَلَا عَلَی الْمَرْضٰی وَلَا عَلَی الَّذِ ۪ یْنَ لَایَجِدُوْنَ مَا
یُ ۪ نْفِقُ ۪ وْ نَ حَرَجٌ اِذَا نَصَحُوْا لِلّٰ وَرَسُوْلِ ؕ مَا عَلَی الْمُحْسِنِ ۪ یْنَ ہ ۪ مْ سَبِ ۪ یْلٍ ؕ وَاللّٰ
غَفُ ۪ وْرٌ رَّحِ ۪ یْمٌ ۹۱

(9-91) There is no blame on the weak nor on those who have nothing to enable them to join (the struggle in the Way of Allah) if they stay behind provided that they are sincere to Allah and to His Messenger. [92] There is no cause for reproach against those who do good. Allah is All-Forgiving, Ever Merciful.

(92) This implies that even those people who are otherwise excusable because of disability, sickness or indigence will be pardoned only if they are sincerely and truly faithful to Allah and His Messenger (peace be upon him). Without this fidelity, no one shall be pardoned merely because he was sick or indigent at the time when he was called upon to go forth for Jihad. For Allah does not judge merely by appearances, and treats alike, and forgives all those who present medical certificates of their disability because of sickness, old age or some other physical defect. On the Day of Judgment, He will examine minutely the heart of each and everyone, and take into account his whole conduct, open and hidden, and will consider whether his excuse was of a faithful servant or of a traitor and rebel. It is obvious that each and every case, in spite of apparent similarity, requires a separate and different judgment. For instance, let us take the case of two men who suddenly fell ill on the eve of Jihad. One of them thanked his lucky stars for the timely disease, as if to say, “How lucky it is that I have fallen ill on the opportune moment! Otherwise, this calamity of Jihad could not have been avoided and I would have had to suffer it anyhow.” On the contrary, the other man was filled with sorrow at his illness, and he cried in anguish, “Ah, what a bad luck! I have been attacked by this sudden disease at the time when I ought to have been in the battlefield instead of lying down here in bed.” One of them made his illness not only an excuse for exemption from Jihad but also tried to dissuade others from it. On the contrary, the other one, though lying in the bed, went on urging his own dear relatives, friends, and others to go forth to Jihad; nay, he entreated even those who were attending him, saying, “Leave me in the care of the real Master, and go forth to Jihad. I am sure that the arrangements for my nursing will be made somehow. Therefore, you should not waste your precious chance for my sake but go forth and serve the right way.” But the other, who stayed at home, spent all this time in spreading discontent and bad news and in damaging war efforts and in disrupting the affairs of the families of the fighters. The other man in similar circumstances did his very best to make the home front as strong as he could. Though these two men had similar excuses for exemption, they cannot be considered as equal in the sight of Allah: the second one only may expect Allah’s pardon, and not the first man who was a traitor and rebel against Allah, though he might have had a genuine excuse for exemption.

وَّلَا عَلَى الَّذِ ۙ نَ اِذَا مَا اَتَوْكَ لِتَحْمِلَهُمْ قُلْتَ لَآ اَجِدُ مَآ اَحْمِلُكُمْ عَلَ ۡ ہِ تَوَلَّوا وَّ
اَعْيُنُهُ مْ تَفِ ۡ ضُ مِنَ الدَّمْعِ حَزَنًا اَلَّا يَجِدُوْ ا مَا يُ ۡ نِفِقُوْنَ ؕ ۹۲

(9-92) Nor can there be any cause for reproach against those who, when they came to you asking for mounts to go to the battlefront, and when you said that you had no mounts for them, they went back, their eyes overflowing with tears, grieving that they had no resources to enable them to take part in fighting. (93)

(93) Such people as felt a strong urge for Jihad but could not join it because of some really genuine excuse, will be counted by Allah among those who actually took part in it, even though they could not join it in person and do anything practically for it. This is because they were sincerely grieved at their absence from Jihad for no fault of theirs, just as a man of the world would be grieved if he were deprived of some lucrative business or of some high profit. Allah considers such a one as on duty, because his heart was serving in the Way of Allah, though he had been deprived of active service on account of some genuine excuse. The Prophet (peace be upon him), while returning from Tabuk, stated the same thing like this: “There are some people at Al-Madinah (at this time) who have been traveling and marching all along with you through every valley. Naturally the companions to whom he was speaking were wonder struck at this. So they asked, “While staying at Al-Madinah?” He replied, “Yes, while staying at Al- Madinah! This is because they were compelled by the circumstances to stay behind at Al-Madinah: otherwise they would certainly have accompanied you.”

إِنَّمَا السَّبِيلُ عَلَى الَّذِينَ يَسْتَـْٔذِنُونَكَ وَهُمْ أَغْنِيَآءُ رَضُوا۟ بِأَن يَكُونُوا۟ مَعَ
ٱلْخَوَالِفِ وَطَبَعَ ٱللَّهُ عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِهِمْ فَهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ٩٣

(9-93) But there are grounds for reproach against those who seek leave to stay behind even though they are affluent. They are the ones who were content to be with the womenfolk who stay behind. Allah has set a seal on their hearts, leaving them bereft of understanding.

يَعْتَذِرُونَ إِلَيْكُمْ إِذَا رَجَعْتُمْ إِلَيْهِمْ ۚ قُل لَّا تَعْتَذِرُوا۟ لَن نُّؤْمِنَ لَكُمْ قَدْ نَبَّأَنَا ٱللَّهُ
مِنْ أَخْبَارِكُمْ ۚ وَسَيَرَى ٱللَّهُ عَمَلَكُمْ وَرَسُولُهُۥ ثُمَّ تُرَدُّونَ إِلَىٰ عَٰلِمِ ٱلْغَيْبِ وَٱلشَّهَٰدَةِ
فَيُنَبِّئُكُم بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ٩٤

(9-94) They will put up excuses before you when you return to them. Tell them: "Make no excuses. We will not believe you. Allah has already informed us of the truth about you. Allah will observe your conduct, and so will His Messenger; then you will be brought back to Him Who knows alike what lies beyond perception and what lies in the range of perception and will let you know what you have done."

سَيَحْلِفُوْنَ بِاللّٰهِ لَكُمْ اِذَا انْقَلَبْتُمْ اِلَيْهِمْ لِتُعْرِضُوْا عَنْهُمْ ؕ فَاَعْرِضُوْا عَنْهُمْ ؕ اِنَّهُمْ رِجْسٌ وَّمَاْوٰىهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ ۚ جَزَآءًۢ بِمَا كَانُوْا يَكْسِبُوْنَ ۝٩٥

(9-95) When you return to them they will surely swear to you in the name of Allah that you may leave them alone. So do leave them alone; (94) they are unclean. Hell shall be their home, a recompense for what they did.

(94) The Arabic words are of the same root but have different senses in the two sentences in which they occur. In the first sentence it means, “You may turn away from them” and forbear them and may not take them to task. In the second sentence it means, “So turn away from them” and break off all connections with them and have nothing to do with them, as if you had broken off completely with them, and they with you.

يَحْلِفُوْنَ لَكُمْ لِتَرْضَوْا عَنْهُمْ ۚ فَاِنْ تَرْضَوْا عَنْهُمْ فَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَا يَرْضٰى عَنِ الْقَوْمِ الْفٰسِقِيْنَ ۝٩٦

(9-96) They will swear to you in order to please you. But even if you become pleased with them, Allah will not be pleased with such an evil-doing folk.

اَلْاَعْرَابُ اَشَدُّ كُفْرًا وَّنِفَاقًا وَّاَجْدَرُ اَلَّا يَعْلَمُوْا حُدُوْدَ مَاۤ اَنْزَلَ اللّٰهُ عَلٰى رَسُوْلِهٖ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ عَلِيْمٌ حَكِيْمٌ ۝٩٧

(9-97) The bedouin Arabs surpass all in unbelief and hypocrisy and are most likely to be unaware of the limits prescribed by Allah in what He has revealed to His Messenger. Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise. (95)

(95) As has already been stated earlier the “Bedouins” here refers to those rustic Arabs of the desert who had settled in the suburbs of Al-Madinah.

The background which may help one to comprehend the meanings of the verse is this. Though these people had outwardly embraced Islam, they had not done so from conviction. When they saw the rising of the organized power of Islam in Al-Madinah, they were so overawed by it that they could not ignore it. So at first they adopted the attitude of the opportunists towards the conflict between Islam and kufr. But when the power of the Islamic government spread over the major portions of Hijaz and Najd, and the power of its enemy clans began to decline, they thought it expedient to enter the fold of Islam. But there were very few among

them who had sincerely accepted Islam from the conviction that it was the right way. That is why they did not make any sincere efforts to fulfill the implications of the true faith, and observe the obligatory duties imposed by Islam. On the contrary, the majority of them had accepted Islam just because it was the best policy for them. They merely desired to take advantages of being Muslims in order to gain those benefits to which they were entitled as members of the ruling party, without performing those duties which became obligatory on them by the very acceptance of Islam. Therefore they were utterly averse to saying the prescribed prayers, observing the fasting, paying the Zakat dues from their date palm gardens and their herds of cattle. Moreover, they smarted under the discipline of the Islamic state and resented being subdued by any power for the first time in history. Above all, it was against their very nature to make sacrifices of their lives and wealth in the Way of Allah, as was being demanded by Islam, for they were accustomed to fight only for plunder and spoils. That is why they always invented one excuse or the other for exemption from the restrictions and obligations that were being imposed on them. For, they had no interest in the truth or the welfare of humanity; their only concern was their camels and their goats, that is, the narrow world around their tents. As regards anything higher than these, the only thing which they could believe in was irrational reverence for those who would guarantee their worldly welfare and protect them from calamities and give them amulets to safeguard them against haram and evil, and say prayers for them as a recompense for their offerings to them. But they were not prepared to accept any faith or belief that would bring under its moral and legal discipline every aspect of their cultural, social and economic life, and demand from them the sacrifices of lives and wealth for the cause of a universal reform.

In this verse, the above mentioned mental and moral condition of the Bedouins has been described like this: "These Bedouins are more hypocritical than the urban Arabs and are more stubborn and obdurate in their denial of the truth. This is because the urban people make use of the opportunities of meeting the learned and pious people and thus learn the laws and regulations of the true way. On the other hand, in all probability, the Bedouins will learn little about the divine way, because they get few opportunities for this. Moreover, they lead lives of economic animals rather than of human beings having moral and spiritual values; therefore they do not think of higher things than their animal urges.

It should also be noted that the main cause of the subsequent storm of rebellion and apostasy during the caliphate of

Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him) two years after the revelation of these verses (97-99) was the same that has been mentioned therein.

وَ مِنَ ا لۡ اَعۡرَابِ مَنۡ يَّتَّخِذُ مَا يُنۡفِقُ مَغۡرَمًا وَّ يَتَرَبَّصُ بِكُمُ الدَّوَآئِرَ ؕ عَلَيۡهِمۡ دَآئِرَ السَّوۡءِ ؕ وَاللّٰ ُ سَمِ ۡ عٌ عَلِيۡمٌ ﴿۹۸﴾

(9-98) And among the Bedouin Arabs there are such as regard whatever they spend (in the Way of Allah) as a fine (96) and wait for some misfortune to befall you. May ill fortune befall them! Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing.

(96) This means that they regarded the payment of Zakat dues as a fine and the expenditure on hospitality, an Islamic duty, a penalty. Likewise, if they had to make any contributions towards Jihad, they did so to show that they were loyal to the Islamic state and not because they wanted to please Allah by giving sincere monetary help for His cause.

وَ مِنَ ا لَ اعۡرَابِ مَنۡ يُّ ؤۡمِنُ بِاللّٰ ِ وَ ا لۡيَ ۡ مِ ا لۡاٰخِرِ وَ يَتَّخِذُ مَا يُ ۡ فِقُ قُرُبٰتٍ عِ ۡ دَ اللّٰ ِ وَ صَلَوٰتِ الرَّسُوۡ ِ لِ ؕ اَلَاۤ اِنَّ ا قُ ۡ بٌ لَّ ؕ سَيُ ۡ خِلُهُمُ اللّٰ ُ فِ ۡ ي رَحۡمَتِهٖ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰ َ غَفُوۡرٌ رَّحِ ۡ مٌ ﴿۹۹﴾

(9-99) And among the Bedouin Arabs are those who believe in Allah and the Last Day, and regard their spending (in the Way of Allah) as a means of drawing near to Allah and of deserving the prayers of the Messenger. Indeed, this shall be a means of drawing near to Allah. Allah will surely admit them to His mercy. Allah is All-Forgiving, Ever Merciful.

وَ السّٰبِقُوْنَ الْاَوَّلُوْنَ مِنَ الْمُهٰجِرِيْنَ وَ الْاَنْصَارِ وَ الَّذِيْنَ اتَّبَعُوْهُمْ بِاِحْسَانٍ
رَّضِيَ اللّٰهُ عَنْهُمْ وَ رَضُوْا عَنْهُ وَ اَعَدَّ لَهُمْ جَنّٰتٍ تَجْرِيْ تَحْتَهَا الْاَنْهٰرُ خٰلِدِيْنَ فِيْهَاۤ اَبَدًا ؕ
ذٰلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيْمُ ﴿۱۰۰﴾

(9-100) And of those who led the way - the first of the Emigrants (Muhajirin) and the Helpers (Ansar), and those who followed them in the best possible manner - Allah is well-pleased with them and they are well-pleased with Allah. He has prepared for them Gardens beneath which rivers flow; therein they will abide forever. That is the supreme triumph.

وَ مِمَّنْ حَوْلَكُمْ مِّنَ الْاَعْرَابِ مُنٰفِقُوْنَ ۛ وَ مِنْ اَهْلِ الْمَدِيْنَةِ ۛ مَرَدُوْا عَلَى النِّفَاقِ لَا تَعْلَمُهُمْ ؕ
نَحْنُ نَعْلَمُهُمْ ؕ سَنُعَذِّبُهُمْ مَّرَّتَيْنِ ثُمَّ يُرَدُّوْنَ اِلٰى عَذَابٍ عَظِيْمٍ ﴿۱۰۱﴾

(9-101) As for the bedouin Arabs around you, some are hypocrites; and so are some of the people of Madinah who have become inured to hypocrisy. You do not know them, but We know them. (97) We will inflict double chastisement on them, (98) and then they shall be returned to an awesome suffering.

(97) They had become so expert in the art of hiding their hypocrisy that even the Prophet (peace be upon him) could not recognize them, though he possessed immense sagacity and insight into human nature; so Allah informed him about them.

(98) This double chastisement will be the loss of their worldly advantages and the victory of the Islamic mission in the teeth of their opposition. Thus one chastisement shall be the loss of their worldly benefits for which they practiced deceptions and adopted hypocritical attitudes, and instead of gaining wealth, honor and prestige they shall meet with disgrace and utter failure. The second chastisement will be in the shape of the victory of the Islamic mission to defeat which they exerted their utmost by their machinations and plots. But the Islamic mission will come out successful in the teeth of their evil wishes, desires, intentions and vicious efforts and they themselves shall witness its victory to their utter despair, regret, grief and sorrow.

وَ اٰخَرُوْنَ اعْتَرَفُوْا بِذُنُوْبِهِمْ خَلَطُوْا عَمَلًا صَالِحًا وَّ اٰخَرَ سَيِّئًا ؕ عَسَى اللّٰهُ اَنْ
يَّتُوْبَ عَلَيْهِمْ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ غَفُوْرٌ رَّحِيْمٌ ﴿۱۰۲﴾

(9-102) There are others who have confessed their faults. They intermixed their good deeds with evil. It is likely that Allah will turn to them in mercy, for Allah is All- Forgiving, Ever Merciful.

خُذْ مِنْ اَمْوَالِهِمْ صَدَقَةً تُطَهِّرُهُمْ وَ تُزَكِّيْهِمْ بِهَا وَ صَلِّ عَلَيْهِمْ ؕ اِنَّ صَلٰوتَكَ سَكَنٌ لَّهُمْ ؕ وَ اللّٰهُ سَمِيْعٌ عَلِيْمٌ ﴿۱۰۳﴾

(9-103) (O Prophet)! "Take alms out of their riches and thereby cleanse them and bring about their growth (in righteousness), and pray for them. Indeed your prayer is a source of tranquility for them." Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing.

اَلَمْ يَعْلَمُوْۤا اَنَّ اللّٰهَ هُوَ يَقْبَلُ التَّوْبَةَ عَنْ عِبَادِهٖ وَ يَاْخُذُ الصَّدَقٰتِ وَ اَنَّ اللّٰهَ هُوَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيْمُ ﴿۱۰۴﴾

(9-104) Are they not aware that it is Allah Who accepts the repentance of His servants and accepts their alms, and that it is Allah Who is Oft-Relenting, Ever Merciful?

وَ قُلِ اعْمَلُوْا فَسَيَرَى اللّٰهُ عَمَلَكُمْ وَ رَسُوْلُهٗ وَ الْمُؤْمِنُوْنَ ؕ وَ سَتُرَدُّوْنَ اِلٰى عٰلِمِ الْغَيْبِ وَ الشَّهَادَةِ فَيُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُوْنَ ﴿۱۰۵﴾

(9-105) And tell them, (O Prophet): "Keep working: Allah will behold your works and so will His Messenger and the believers; (99) and you shall be brought back to Him Who knows that which is beyond the reach of perception and that which is within the reach of perception. He will then declare to you all that you have been doing." (100)

(99) In this passage a clear line of demarcation has been drawn between the hypocritical Muslims and the true Muslims, and instructions have been given regarding the treatment that should be meted out to the hypocrites. Therefore, the one who claims to be a Muslim but does not sincerely devote himself to Allah, His Way, and the Islamic community, should be severely dealt with. If there is a clear proof, from his conduct, that he lacks sincerity or if he offers anything in the Way of Allah, it should be rejected forthwith. And when he dies, the Muslims should neither join his funeral prayer nor beg God’s pardon for him, even though he be one’s father or brother. In contrast to this, if a believer is guilty of some sin and confesses it, he should be pardoned, and his offerings should be accepted and prayers should be said for his forgiveness.
As regards the criterion by which it will be judged whether one is or is not a hypocrite, though one might have been guilty of an act of insincerity, three things have been implied in this passage:

(1) A sincere follower will openly and clearly confess his sin without offering any lame excuses and giving false explanations and interpretations of his offense.

(2) It will be judged from his previous conduct whether he was a habitual offender or he committed the sin on the spur of the moment because of some weakness. If he had been behaving like a righteous Muslim and if his record showed sincere services, sacrifices and good deeds to his credit, it will be reasonably concluded that he was not a hypocrite.

(3) His future conduct will be watched to see whether his confession was verbal or there had really been a change of heart. If he sincerely feels sorry for his sins and is anxious to compensate for them and his whole conduct shows that he intends to eradicate the root cause of the weakness in his faith that misled him into the sins, it will be concluded that he sincerely feels sorry for his sins and that he was not a hypocrite but a sinful believer.

The event that is connected with the occasion on which this passage was sent down, makes this subject quite clear. It is related by the scholars of traditions that these verses were revealed in regard to Abu Lubabah bin Abdul Manzar and his companions. Abu Lubabah (may Allah be pleased with him) was one of those people who had embraced Islam on the occasion of the oath of allegiance at Aqabah before the migration of the Prophet (peace be upon him) to Al- Madinah. He had taken part in the battles of Badr, Uhd and other campaigns. But on the occasion of the Tabuk expedition, he succumbed to some inner weakness and stayed at home without any genuine and lawful excuse. The same was the case of the other six companions, who were sincere Muslims. When the Prophet (peace be upon him) returned from Tabuk and they came to know that Allah and His Messenger had a very bad opinion of those who had stayed behind, they were filled with shame and regret. Therefore they tied themselves to a pillar even before they were called upon to explain their conduct. Then they declared, “We will neither eat anything nor sleep unless we are pardoned or die in the same condition.” After some days they fell down in an unconscious condition because of hunger and sleeplessness. When at last they were informed that Allah and His Messenger had pardoned them, they went to see the Prophet (peace be upon him) and said: “We request that you accept from us as propitiatory offerings our houses and the whole of our possessions. As these were responsible for our sin of omission, we desire to give them away in the Way of Allah.” But the Prophet (peace be upon him) replied, “There is no need to give the whole of your property for only one third of it will suffice.”

A deep consideration of this event clearly brings out the kind of weaknesses that are pardonable. All of these people were not habitual offenders and defaulters. Their whole past conduct showed that they were sincere Muslims. None of them invented false explanations to excuse themselves but confessed their sins. By offering the whole of their properties as a propitiatory offerings, they proved that they were really sorry for their conduct and wanted to atone for their sins.

In this connection, another important lesson should also be learned from these verses. In order to atone for one's sins, one should give a practical proof along with the verbal confession and heartfelt regret. One way of this is to give charity in the Way of Allah for this helps to cleanse the filth which was being nourished in the heart and which was responsible for the sins. This not only eradicates the hidden evil but also increases the capacity for good works. For the confession of one's sin is like the feeling of one who has fallen into a pit. He at once realizes that he is in a critical situation in a pit, where he does not like to abide, and is troubled over it. Therefore he thinks out plans for getting out of it and makes practical efforts for this. Likewise the one who confesses his sins and feels ashamed of them and takes practical steps to atone for it by making offerings and doing other good works, intends to come out of the pit of sins.

(100) "And you will be returned to the Knower," Who is the ultimate judge of everything and from Whom nothing can be concealed. Therefore even if one succeeds in hiding one's hypocrisy in this world or is judged to be up to the standard in one's faith and sincerity, it does not mean in any way that such a one will succeed in escaping chastisement for hypocrisy in the Hereafter also.

وَ اٰخَرُوْ نَ مُ رَ جَوْ نَ لِاَمْرِ اللّٰهِ اِمَّا يُعَذِّبُهُمْ وَ اِمَّا يَتُوْبُ عَلَيْهِمْ ؕ وَ اللّٰهُ عَلِيْمٌ حَكِيْمٌ ﴿۱۰۶﴾

(9-106) There are others in whose regard Allah's decree is awaited: whether He will chastise them or relent towards them. Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise. (101)

(101) The case of these people had been deferred because it could not yet be legally decided whether they were sinners or hypocrites, and not because their case was doubtful in the sight of Allah. This was because the symptoms of their diseases had not as yet come to the surface to indicate clearly which of the two they were. For Islam teaches the Muslims not to pass judgment on a

person or a party unless they possess definite knowledge based on conscious reasoning and not on intuition and the like to support it.

وَالَّذِيْنَ اتَّخَذُوْا مَسْجِدًا ضِرَارًا وَّكُفْرًا وَّتَفْرِيْقًۢا بَيْنَ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ وَاِرْصَادًا
لِّمَنْ حَارَبَ اللّٰهَ وَرَسُوْلَهٗ مِنْ قَبْلُ ؕ وَلَيَحْلِفُنَّ اِنْ اَرَدْنَاۤ اِلَّا الْحُسْنٰى ؕ وَاللّٰهُ
يَشْهَدُ اِنَّهُمْ لَكٰذِبُوْنَ ﴿۱۰۷﴾

(9-107) Then there are others who have set up a mosque to hurt the True Faith, to promote unbelief, and cause division among believers, and as an ambush for one who had earlier made war on Allah and His Messenger. They will surely swear: "We intended nothing but good," whereas Allah bears witness that they are liars.

لَا تَقُمْ فِيْهِ اَبَدًا ؕ لَمَسْجِدٌ اُسِّسَ عَلَى التَّقْوٰى مِنْ اَوَّلِ يَوْمٍ اَحَقُّ اَنْ تَقُوْمَ
فِيْهِ ؕ فِيْهِ رِجَالٌ يُّحِبُّوْنَ اَنْ يَّتَطَهَّرُوْا ؕ وَاللّٰهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُطَّهِّرِيْنَ ﴿۱۰۸﴾

(9-108) Never stand therein. Surely a mosque founded from the first day on piety is more worthy that you should stand in it for Prayer. In it are people who love to purify themselves, and Allah loves those that purify themselves. (102)

(102) “Who warred against Allah and His Messenger” was Abu Amir who belonged to the clan of Aus of Al-Madinah. He had become Christian monk during the period of ignorance before the migration of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and was well known as a scholar of the Scriptures and was held in great reverence as a pious monk. But his scholarship and asceticism, instead of leading him to the truth, became hindrance in the way. That was why he not only rejected Islam but also became a bitter enemy of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and his mission, for he took the Prophet (peace be upon him) for a rival in the holy business of priesthood. At first he ignored the Prophet (peace be upon him) and his mission in the hope that the power of the Quraish would suffice to crush him and his mission. But when the Quraish suffered an utter defeat in the battle of Badr, he could no longer ignore it, so he started a vigorous vicious campaign against the Islamic movement. Accordingly, he left Al-Madinah and visited different clans, in order to incite them against Islam, and was one of those who brought about the battle of Uhd. It is said that he had gotten some pits dug in the battle field of Uhd, and that the Prophet (peace be upon him) fell into one of these and received injuries. Then he played an important role in organizing the armies which came to invade Al-Madinah in the battle of Al-Ahzab. Likewise this Christian monk took a very active part in giving support to the mushriks against Islam in all the subsequent battles up to the

battle of Hunain. At last, when he realized that no power in Arabia could withstand the onslaught of Islam, he left Arabia and went to the Roman Caesar in order to warn him of the rising danger from Al-Madinah. It was because of his efforts that the Caesar began to make preparations for invading Arabia, to counteract which the Prophet (peace be upon him) went forth on the expedition to Tabuk.

Now let us consider the background of the building of the mosque that was built to harm the righteous mission.

A section of the hypocrites of Al-Madinah collaborated wholeheartedly with Abu Amir in all the above mentioned hostile activities against Islam. They also fully agreed with him that he should use his spiritual influence to obtain military help from the Roman Caesar and the Christian states of northern Arabia. Accordingly, when he was preparing to go to the Roman Caesar to urge him to invade Arabia, they devised a plan of making a mosque of their own to serve as a safe meeting place for organizing themselves into a separate party because none would suspect that they were carrying on evil activities under the garb of religion. Moreover, this mosque would serve as an ambush for the agents of Abu Amir who could stay in it as travelers and mendicants without raising any suspicion that they were spies of the enemy.

As there were already two mosques in Al-Madinah, one at Quba and the other Masjid-i-Nabavi in the city. Obviously there was no need for a third one. The hypocrites themselves understood this: therefore they began to invent reasons to show that there was really a need for a third mosque. Accordingly, they went to the Prophet (peace be upon him) and said, “We need another mosque because it is very difficult for the people of this area, especially the old, the sick and the disabled, to offer the five prescribed prayers in either of the two mosques, during the winter season and the rainfall. Therefore we intend to build a new mosque only for the convenience of those who live at a distance from the two mosques but are desirous of saying their prayers in congregation.

With such professedly pure motives, these mischief makers built the mosque and then went to the Prophet (peace be upon him) with the request to stand in this new mosque and lead the congregation in one of the prescribed prayers so as to perform its opening ceremony. But the Prophet (peace be upon him) postponed the matter, saying, “At this time I am wholly engaged in making preparations for the expedition to Tabuk. I shall consider the matter on my return home.” After this he went forth to Tabuk, and they

started their nefarious activities. They went on organizing themselves and conspiring against Islam in the mosque and decided to crown Abdullah bin Ubayy as their king, as soon as the Muslims would meet with reverses and be utterly crushed down by the Romans, as they had expected. But their expectations were all frustrated by what happened at Tabuk. Then on the revelation of these verses during the return journey at a place, Zi-Avan, near Al-Madinah, the Prophet (peace be upon him) dispatched some men to demolish the mosque before his entry into the city.

أَفَمَنْ أَسَّسَ بُنْيَانَهُ عَلَىٰ تَقْوَىٰ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَرِضْوَانٍ خَيْرٌ أَم مَّنْ أَسَّسَ بُنْيَانَهُ عَلَىٰ شَفَا جُرُفٍ هَارٍ فَانْهَارَ بِهِ فِي نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ ۗ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿١٠٩﴾

(9-109) Is he, then, who has erected his structure on the fear of Allah and His good pleasure better, or he who erects his structure on the brink of a crumbling bank, (103) so that it crumbles down with him into the Hell-Fire? Allah does not bestow His Guidance on the wrong-doing folk. (104)

(103) In order to comprehend fully the implications of this simile, let us first consider the significance of the Arabic word Juruf. This applies to the brink of that piece of land which has been undermined by a river or a stream, leaving its surface without any support. In this meaningful simile the construction of the structure of life on the Godless foundations has been compared to that building which is built on the river brink, which has been undermined by its water. It is obvious that the ignorant man who builds a structure on the surface of such a piece of land, merely because it is a piece of land, will not only lose the building but will also lose his own life, for it will inevitably fall down into the river along with him because it has nothing to support it. Likewise, the one who lays the foundation of the structure of the system of his life on the surface of worldly things, without any regard to God’s fear or His favor which are the only permanent supports of human life, is like the man who builds his structure on the surface undermined by the river. For such a man, he himself undermines the structure of his life by his wrong deeds which inevitably follow if there is no bedrock of God’s fear and His favor. Therefore the surface on which he had built his life would one day inevitably tumble down into the abyss of Hell along with the earnings of his whole life.

(104) “Guide”, that leads to man’s real success.

لَا يَزَالُ بُنۡيَانُهُمُ الَّذِىۡ بَنَوۡا رِيۡبَةً فِىۡ قُلُوۡبِهِمۡ اِلَّاۤ اَنۡ تَقَطَّعَ قُلُوۡبُهُمۡ ؕ وَ اللّٰهُ عَلِيۡمٌ حَكِيۡمٌ ۱۱۰

(9-110) And the structure which they have erected will ever inspire their hearts with doubts unless it be that their very hearts are cut into pieces. (105) Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise.

(105) That is, these hypocrites have deprived their hearts of the capability of receiving and accepting faith by the commission of the most heinous sin of building a mosque to do harm to that very Islam for the propagation of which mosques are built. This crime has set the desire of disbelief so deep in their hearts that it will remain there as long as they are alive and will leave them only at the time of death when their hearts will cease to beat in their breasts. Obviously, the case of such people is quite different from that of those unbelievers, who openly build idol-temples or openly make preparations for war against God. For it is possible that such a one may get guidance just because he is honest, sincere and bold. Moreover, his open antagonism shows that he has the courage of his convictions and may, therefore, accept Islam, when he would be convinced of its truth. But there is no hope for that cowardly lying and cunning man who builds a mosque for the service of kufr and puts on the garb of God's worship for fighting against Allah's Way. This is because a conduct like this kills all the noble sentiments within him and renders him utterly incapable of understanding and accepting Islam.

اِنَّ اللّٰهَ اشۡتَرٰى مِنَ الۡمُؤۡمِنِيۡنَ اَنۡفُسَهُمۡ وَاَمۡوَالَهُمۡ بِاَنَّ لَهُمُ الۡجَنَّةَ ؕ يُقَاتِلُوۡنَ فِىۡ سَبِيۡلِ اللّٰهِ فَيَقۡتُلُوۡنَ وَيُقۡتَلُوۡنَ ۟ وَعۡدًا عَلَيۡهِ حَقًّا فِى التَّوۡرٰٮةِ وَالۡاِنۡجِيۡلِ وَالۡقُرۡاٰنِ ؕ وَمَنۡ اَوۡفٰى بِعَهۡدِهٖ مِنَ اللّٰهِ فَاسۡتَبۡشِرُوۡا بِبَيۡعِكُمُ الَّذِىۡ بَايَعۡتُمۡ بِهٖ ؕ وَذٰلِكَ هُوَ الۡفَوۡزُ الۡعَظِيۡمُ ۱۱۱

(9-111) Surely Allah has purchased of the believers their lives and their belongings and in return has promised that they shall have Paradise. (106) They fight in the Way of Allah, and slay and are slain. Such is the promise He has made incumbent upon Himself in the Torah, and the Gospel, and the Quran. (107) Who is more faithful to his promise than Allah? Rejoice, then, in the bargain you have made with Him. That indeed is the mighty triumph.

(106) In this verse that aspect of the Islamic faith which determines the nature of the relationship between Allah and His servants has been called a transaction. This means that faith is not merely a metaphysical conception but is, in fact, a contract by which the servant sells his life and possessions to Allah and in return for

this accepts His promise that He would give him the Garden in the life after death. In order to comprehend the full implications of this transaction, let us first understand its nature.

We should note it well at the outset that, in reality, this transaction is not in regard to the actual selling of the life and possessions of the servant to Allah in the literal sense, for Allah is in fact the real Owner of man's life and possessions. Allah alone has the right of ownership because He is the Creator of man and of everything he possesses and uses. Therefore there is no question at all of selling and buying in the worldly sense; for man possesses nothing of his own to sell, and Allah has no need to buy anything because everything already belongs to Him. However, there is one thing which has entirely been entrusted to man by Allah, that is, the freedom of will and the freedom of choice, and the transaction concerns that thing.

Of course, it is true that this freedom does not make any change in the real position of man with regard to the right of ownership to his own life and his possessions. They belong to Allah Who has delegated to him only the authority to use or abuse these things as he wills, without any coercion or compulsion from Him. This means that man has been given the freedom to acknowledge or not to acknowledge that Allah is the owner of his life and property. The transaction mentioned in Ayat 111 is concerning the voluntary surrender of this freedom to Allah's will. In other words, Allah wills to test man whether he acknowledges the ownership of Allah over his life and property, in spite of that freedom, and considers himself to be their trustee only, or behaves as if he were their owner and so could do whatever he liked with them.

Thus, the terms of this transaction from Allah's side are these: "If you voluntarily, and not by compulsion or coercion, agree to acknowledge that your life, your property and everything in this world, which in fact belong to me, are mine: And if you consider yourself only as their trustees; And if you voluntarily surrender the freedom I have given you to behave; And if you, in a dishonest way do not intend to become their master and owner; Then, I will give you in return, Gardens in the eternal life of the next world". The one who makes this bargain with Allah is a believer, for faith is in fact the other name for making this bargain. On the other hand, the one who refuses to make this bargain, or after making it adopts the attitude of the one who has not made the bargain, is a kafir. For, technically, kufr is the term applied to the refusal to make this bargain.

The following are the implications of making this transaction:

(1) Allah has put man to two very hard tests in this matter. The first is whether he acknowledges the real Owner as owner, in spite of the freedom of choice given to him. Or he refuses this and becomes ungrateful, treacherous and rebellious. The second test is whether he puts his trust in his God or not. And he surrenders his freedom and sacrifices his desires and wishes in this present world in return for His promise of the Gardens and eternal bliss in the next world. Even though the world were to proclaim, “A bird in hand is worth two in the bush”.

(2) This matter helps to draw a clear line of demarcation between the legal conception of the Islamic faith and the higher and spiritual one according to which Allah will judge one in the Hereafter.

According to its legal conception, the mere verbal profession of the articles of the faith is a sufficient proof that one is legally a Muslim and after this no jurist is authorized to declare such a one to be a disbeliever or to expel one from the fold of the Islamic community, unless there is a definite and clear proof that the one made a false profession of the faith. But this is not so with Allah. Allah considers the faith of only that person to be true, who makes this bargain with Him and sells his freedom of thought and action to Him and gives up his entire claim to ownership in His favor. That is why a man might profess the articles of the faith and observe the prescribed obligatory duties, but if he considered himself alone to be the master and owner of his body and soul, his heart and brain and his other faculties, his property and his resources and other things in his possession, and reserved to himself the right of expending them as he willed, he shall be regarded a disbeliever in the sight of Allah, even though he should be regarded a believer in the sight of the world. This is because such a man has not made that bargain with God which is the essence of the faith according to the Quran. The very fact that a man does not expend his life and property in the way Allah approves of, or expends these in the way He disapproves, shows that the one who claimed to profess the faith either did not sell these to Allah, or after having made the transaction still regarded himself to be their master and owner.

(3) The above conception of the Islamic faith draws a clear line of demarcation between the attitude of a Muslim and that of a disbeliever towards life. The Muslim, who sincerely believes in Allah, surrenders himself completely to Allah’s will, and does nothing whatsoever which may show that he is independent in his attitude, except when he temporarily forgets the terms of the bargain he has

made with Him. Likewise no community of the Muslims can collectively adopt an independent attitude in political, cultural, economic, social and international matters and still remain Muslim. And if sometimes it temporarily forgets its subordinate position and its voluntary surrender of its freedom, it will give up the attitude of independence and readopt the attitude of surrender, as soon as it becomes aware of its error. In contrast to this, if one adopts the attitude of independence towards Allah and makes decisions about all the affairs of life in accordance with ones own wishes, whims and caprices, one shall be regarded to have adopted the attitude of disbelief, even though one was a Muslim.

(4) It should also be noted well that the will of God to which a man is required to surrender himself is that which is specified by Allah himself and not the one which the man himself declares to be the will of God. For in the latter case one does not follow God's will but one's own will, which is utterly against the terms of the transaction. Only that person (or community) who adopts the attitude that conforms to the teachings of His Book and His Messenger, shall be deemed to have fulfilled the terms of the transaction.

From the above implications of this transaction, it also becomes clear why the fulfillment of the terms by Allah has been deferred to the next world after the termination of the life of this world. It is obvious that the Garden is not the return for the mere profession that the buyer has sold his life and property to Allah but it is the actual surrender of these things in the worldly life and their disposal by him as a trustee of Allah according to His will. Thus, this transaction will be completed only when the life of the buyer comes to an end in this world and it is proved that after making the bargain, he went on fulfilling the terms of the agreement up to his last breath. For then and there alone, he will be entitled to the recompense in accordance with the terms of the transaction.

It will also be worthwhile to understand the context in which this matter has been placed here. In the preceding passage, there was the mention of those people who failed in the test of their faith and did not make the sacrifice of their time, money, life and interests for the sake of Allah and His Way, in spite of their professions, because of their negligence or lack of sincerity or absolute hypocrisy. Therefore after criticizing the attitudes of different persons and sections, they have been told in clear words the implications of the faith they had accepted: "This is not the mere verbal profession that there is God and He is One, but the acceptance of the fact that He is the Owner and the Master of your

lives and possessions. Therefore, if you are not ready and willing to sacrifice these in obedience to the command of Allah, but expend these and your energies and resources against the will of Allah, it is a clear proof that you were false in your profession of the faith. For, the true believers are those who have truly sold their persons and possessions to Allah, and consider Him to be their Owner and Master, and expend their energies and possessions without any reservations, where He commands them to expend, and do not expend the least of these where He forbids them to expend.

(107) Some critics say that the statement of promise in the Torah and the Gospel is not confirmed by these Books. Their objection in regard to the Gospel is obviously wrong for even in the existing Gospels there are sayings of Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him) that confirm this verse. For instance:

"Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." (MAT. 5: 10).

"He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it." (MAT. 10: 39).

"And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold and shall inherit everlasting life." (MAT. 19: 29).

It is, however, true that the matter of this transaction is not confirmed in its entirety by the existing Torah. For instance, there is a mention of the first part of the bargain at several places in one forth or the other: "Is not He thy father that hath bought thee? hath He not made thee, and established thee?" (DEUT. 32: 6).

"Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might." (DEUT. 6: 4-5).

But as regards the other part of the bargain, that is, the promise of the Gardens, they applied it to the land of Palestine:

"Hear therefore, O Israel, and observe to do it; that it may be well with thee, and that ye may increase mightily, as the Lord God of thy fathers hath promised thee, in the land that floweth with milk and honey." (DEUT. 6: 3).

This is because the Torah does not give any conception of the life-after-death, the Day of Judgment, rewards and punishments in the Hereafter, though this creed has always been an inseparable part of the right way. This does not, however, mean that the Torah did not originally contain this creed. The fact is that the Jews had become so materialistic during the period of their degeneration that they had no other idea of a reward from God than the wellbeing and prosperity in this world. Therefore they perverted all the promises made by God in return for man's service and obedience to Him and applied those to the land of Palestine.

In this connection, it should also be noted that the abovementioned changes became possible because the original Torah had been tampered with in several ways. Some portions were taken away from it and others were added to it. Thus, the Torah in the existing form is not purely the word of God but also contains the comments, etc. of the Jewish scholars mixed up with it. So much so that at some places it becomes difficult to distinguish the word of God from the Jewish traditions, their racial prejudices, their superstitions, their ambitions and, wishes, their legal interpretations, etc. all of which have gotten mixed with the word of God. (See E.N. 2 of Ale-Imran).

اَلتَّآئِبُوۡنَ الۡعٰبِدُوۡنَ الۡحٰمِدُوۡنَ السَّآئِحُوۡنَ الرّٰكِعُوۡنَ السّٰجِدُوۡنَ الۡاٰمِرُوۡنَ
بِالۡمَعۡرُوۡفِ وَالنَّاهُوۡنَ عَنِ الۡمُنۡكَرِ وَالۡحٰفِظُوۡنَ لِحُدُوۡدِ اللّٰهِ ؕ وَبَشِّرِ الۡمُؤۡمِنِيۡنَ
﴿۱۱۲﴾

(9-112) Those who constantly turn to Allah in repentance, (108) who constantly worship Him, who celebrate His praise, who go about the world to serve His cause, (109) who bow down to Him, who prostrate themselves before Him, who enjoin what is good and forbid what is evil, and who keep the limits set by Allah. (110) Announce glad tidings to such believers.

(108) The Arabic word atta-i-bun literally means “those who repent”. But in the context it occurs it implies “those who possess repentance as their permanent characteristic”, that is, they repent over and over again. Moreover, the literal meaning of taubah is “to turn to” or “to turn back”. Therefore its explanatory translation will be “those who turn back to Allah over and over again”. This is the first and foremost characteristic of a true believer because even a true believer is liable to forget the bargain he makes with Allah by which he sells his life and property to Him. As this matter does not concern his sense organs but pertains to his mind and heart, he is liable to forget that these things are not really his property but they belong to Allah. Therefore, even the true believer occasionally forgets the bargain, and behaves in a way as if he were their owner. But as soon as he becomes conscious of this transitory lapse and realizes that he had violated the terms of his agreement, he feels sorry and ashamed of his conduct and turns to his God, begs His pardon and renews the terms of the bargain with Him, and pledges his allegiance to Him after every slip of its violation. This kind of repentance alone is the guarantee that one will always come back to one’s faith: otherwise it is not possible for man because of the inherent human weaknesses, to observe strictly and deliberately the terms of the bargain without ever falling a prey to negligence and error. That is why Allah says in praise of the true believer that “he turns back to Allah over and over again” and not that “he never slips into error after making the bargain of obedience and service to Him”. And this is the greatest excellence that man can accomplish. Let us now consider the wisdom of placing this characteristics first in the list of the characteristics of the true believers. It is to admonish those who had been guilty of crimes after the profession of their faith. They have been told in Ayat 3 that the true believers are those who sell their lives and property to Allah. After this they are being told that if they sincerely intend to become true believers they should first of all create in themselves this characteristic and at once

turn to Allah without showing any obduracy so that they should not deviate further into error.

(109) Some commentators are of the opinion that here Assa-i-hun means “those who observe fast”. As this is not the lexical meaning of the word but only its figurative sense, which has been based on an unauthentic tradition attributed to the Prophet (peace be upon him). We are of the opinion that there is no need to depart from its lexical meanings, that is, “move about in the land (for His sake)”. For here the Arabic word does not mean merely to “move about in the land” but “move about in the land for the sake of noble and high aims, e.g. to propagate Islam, to do Jihad, to emigrate from those places where the unbelievers are in power, and to reform the people, to seek true knowledge, to earn a lawful livelihood and the like”. This characteristic of the believers has been especially mentioned here to reprove those who had not gone forth to Jihad, in spite of their claim that they were believers. They have been admonished that a true believer is the one who goes forth into the land to raise high His word, and exerts his utmost to fulfill the implications of his faith, and not the one who stays behind when he is called upon to move about in the land.

(110) That is those who “strictly observe the limits prescribed by Allah” in regard to the articles of the faith, worship-morality, social behavior, culture, economics, politics, judiciary, peace and war, and in all the aspects of their individual and collective lives. They neither transgress these limits in order to follow their lusts nor invent laws, nor replace the divine law by other laws. They establish these limits and prevent their violations. Hence, the true believers are those who not only strictly observe the limits prescribed by Allah, but also do their very best to establish them and safeguard them so as to prevent their violation to the best of their powers and capabilities.

مَا كَانَ لِلنَّبِيِّ وَ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْٓا اَنْ يَّسْتَغْفِرُوْا لِلْمُشْرِكِيْنَ وَلَوْ كَانُوْٓا اُولِيْ قُرْبٰى مِنْۢ بَعْدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُمْ اَنَّهُمْ اَصْحٰبُ الْجَحِيْمِ ﴿١١٣﴾

(9-113) After it has become clear that they are condemned to the Flaming Fire, (111) it is not for the Prophet and those who believe to ask for the forgiveness of those who associate others with Allah in His Divinity even if they be near of kin.

(111) "That they ask for the forgiveness for the idolaters." implies two things. First, we love them and sympathize with them. Secondly, we consider their crime to be pardonable. There is no harm to cherish these things for the one who is loyal, though a sinner, but it is absolutely wrong in principle to love and sympathize with a person who is an open rebel and to consider his case as pardonable as it renders our own loyalty doubtful. Besides, it adds to the intensity of the crime, if we pray for the forgiveness of a mushrik, who is our near relative. For it means that we consider our relationships to be more valuable than the fulfillment of the implications of our loyalty to Allah and that our love with Allah. And His Way is not wholly unalloyed and that we desire that Allah should also be influenced by the love we have with His rebels and pardon our criminal kinsmen, even though He should throw the other criminals into the fire of Hell. Obviously, all such things are wrong and are against loyalty and sincerity and the faith demands that our love with Allah and His Way should be absolutely unalloyed and that His friend should be our friend and His enemy our enemy. That is why Allah has not said, "Do not pray for the forgiveness of the mushriks." But has instead warned, "It is not for the Prophet (peace be upon him), and those who believe, that they ask for the forgiveness for the idolaters", which implies this: "The right thing for you is that you yourselves should regard it as improper to show sympathy with our rebels and consider their crime as pardonable: nay, you should not wait for any command from Us about this."

In this connection, it should also be noted well that it is forbidden to show sympathy with the mushriks only in matters of faith. As regards the human relationships that demand the observance of the rights of one's own relatives, of showing love, sympathy and kindness, and cherishing fellow-feelings with them is not forbidden at all but it is considered to be a virtue. We must fulfill the worldly rights of a relative whether he be a believer or a disbeliever: we should help him in affliction and give support to the needy ones and the orphans and show all possible sympathy with a sick or wounded person, irrespective of whether he is a Muslim or a non-Muslim.

وَ مَا كَانَ اسْتِغْفَارُ اِبْرٰهِيْمَ لِاَبِيْهِ اِلَّا عَنْ مَّوْعِدَةٍ وَّعَدَهَآ اِيَّاهُ فَلَمَّا تَبَيَّنَ لَهٗٓ اَنَّهٗ عَدُوٌّ لِّلّٰهِ تَبَرَّاَ مِنْهُ ؕ اِنَّ اِبْرٰهِيْمَ لَاَوَّاهٌ حَلِيْمٌ ﴿١١٤﴾

(9-114) And Abraham's prayer for the forgiveness of his father was only because of a promise which he had made to him. (112) Then, when it became clear to him that he was an enemy of Allah, he dissociated himself from him. Surely Abraham was most tender-hearted, God-fearing, forbearing. (113)

(112) The reference is to what Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him) said when he broke off all connections with his father:

(1) "Peace be upon you. I will pray to my Lord to forgive you: for He is very kind to me". (Surah Maryam, Ayat 47).

(2) "And forgive my father: indeed he is of those who have gone astray. And disgrace me not on the Day, when mankind shall be brought back to life; when neither riches nor children shall avail anyone, and none shall obtain salvation except the one who comes before his Lord with a sound and pure heart". (Ash-Shuara Ayats 86-89).

(3) "I will pray for your forgiveness, but I have no power to rescue you from Allah". (Al-Mumtahina Ayat 4).

In the first place it should be noted that even the wording and the tone of the prayer for his father were very guarded, but when Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him) realized that the person for whom he was praying was an open rebel against Allah and a bitter enemy of His Way, he refrained himself from saying even such a guarded prayer for him and declared in clear words that he would have nothing to do with him in future, even though the rebel was his father who had brought him up with love and care.

(113) The words awwah and haleem which the Quran uses for Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him) are very comprehensive in meaning. Awwah is the one who is lamenting, humble, weeping, grief-stricken and God fearing. And haleem is the one who can keep control over himself under all circumstances, and is neither beside himself in anger and enmity nor transgresses the proper limits in his affections, friendships, and relationships. Here both the words have been used in their comprehensive senses. Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him) prayed for his father because he was tender-hearted and lamented for him that he would become the fuel for the fire of Hell. As he had full control over himself, and was very forbearing, he prayed even for that father who had persecuted him cruelly in order

to hinder him from the way of Islam. Lastly, he was God fearing and did not want to go beyond the limits in his love for his father; so he broke off all his relations with his father when he realized that he was an enemy of Allah.

وَ مَا كَانَ اللّٰہُ لِیُضِلَّ قَومًۢا بَعۡدَ اِذۡ ہَدٰىہُمۡ حَتّٰی یُبَیِّنَ لَہُمۡ مَّا یَتَّقُوۡنَ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰہَ بِکُلِّ شَیۡءٍ عَلِیۡمٌ ﴿۱۱۵﴾

(9-115) It is not Allah's way to cause people to stray in error after He has guided them until He has made clear to them what they should guard against. (114) Surely Allah knows everything.

(114) “He has made clear to them” beforehand that they should avoid such and such thoughts, deeds, and ways. But if they take no heed, and persist in wrong thinking and wrongdoing, Allah withholds His guidance from them and lets them follow the wrong way they themselves choose to follow.

This is the general formula that helps understand those passages of the Quran in which Allah ascribes to Himself the guidance and the deviation of the people. Allah’s guidance is that He makes plain to them the right way through His Prophets and Books. Then He enables those who have the intention, to follow the right way. On the other hand, He does not force and compel them to follow the right way, if they themselves intend to persist in the wrong ways in spite of the fact that the right way has been made quite clear to them; He rather enables them to follow the way they themselves intend to follow. As regards the context in which this occurs here, it is plain that it is meant to warn those people who have been mentioned in the preceding passage, and to introduce those who are going to be mentioned in the succeeding passage.

اِنَّ اللّٰہَ لَہٗ مُلۡکُ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَ الۡاَرۡضِ ؕ یُحۡیٖ وَ یُمِیۡتُ ؕ وَ مَا لَکُمۡ مِّنۡ دُوۡنِ اللّٰہِ مِنۡ وَّلِیٍّ وَّ لَا نَصِیۡرٍ ﴿۱۱۶﴾

(9-116) Indeed Allah's is the Kingdom of the heavens and the earth. He it is Who confers life and causes death. You have no protector or helper apart from Allah.

لَقَدۡ تَّابَ اللّٰہُ عَلَی النَّبِیِّ وَ الۡمُہٰجِرِیۡنَ وَ الۡاَنۡصَارِ الَّذِیۡنَ اتَّبَعُوۡہُ فِیۡ سَاعَۃِ الۡعُسۡرَۃِ مِنۡۢ بَعۡدِ مَا کَادَ یَزِیۡغُ قُلُوۡبُ فَرِیۡقٍ مِّنۡہُمۡ ثُمَّ تَابَ عَلَیۡہِمۡ ؕ اِنَّہٗ بِہِمۡ رَءُوۡفٌ رَّحِیۡمٌ ﴿۱۱۷﴾

(9-117) Surely Allah has relented towards the Prophet, and towards the Muhajirin (Emigrants) and the Ansar (Helpers) who

stood by him in the hour of hardship, (115) although the hearts of a party of them had well-nigh swerved. (116) (But when they gave up swerving from the Right Course and followed the Prophet), Allah relented towards them. (117) Surely to them He is the Most Tender, the Most Merciful.

(115) Allah forgave the Prophet (peace be upon him) and his companions for those inadvertent lapses that had been made in connection with the Tabuk expedition, in view of their excellent services. The inadvertent lapse made by the Prophet (peace be upon him) was that he had given leave to stay behind to those people who were able to take part in the Jihad. (Ayat 43).

(116) This refers to those sincere companions who were at first somewhat unwilling to go to war on that critical occasion, but at last overcame their weakness, for they had true faith in their hearts and loved the right way.

(117) That is, Allah will not take them to account for their wrong inclinations for He does not punish a man for that weakness which he himself has overcome and corrected.

وَّ عَلَى الثَّلٰثَةِ الَّذِيۡنَ خُلِّفُوۡا ؕ حَتّٰۤى اِذَا ضَاقَتۡ عَلَيۡهِمُ الۡاَرۡضُ بِمَا رَحُبَتۡ وَ ضَاقَتۡ عَلَيۡهِمۡ اَنۡفُسُهُمۡ وَ ظَنُّوۡۤا اَنۡ لَّا مَلۡجَاَ مِنَ اللّٰهِ اِلَّاۤ اِلَيۡهِ ؕ ثُمَّ تَابَ عَلَيۡهِمۡ لِيَتُوۡبُوۡا ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ هُوَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيۡمُ ﴿۱۱۸﴾

(9-118) And He also relented towards the three whose cases had been deferred. (118) When the earth, for all its spaciousness, became constrained to them, and their own beings became a burden to them, and they realized that there was no refuge for them from Allah except in Him; He relented towards them that they may turn back to Him. Surely, it is Allah Who is Much Forgiving, Ever Merciful. (119)

(118) These three were among those who came to the Prophet (peace be upon him) to present their excuses for staying behind. More than eighty of them were hypocrites, who put forward lame excuses and the Prophet (peace be upon him) accepted these and let them go. Then came the turn of these three, who were true believers, and they confessed their fault plainly. Therefore the Prophet (peace be upon him) postponed the decision of their case and ordered the Muslims not to have any social relations with them till the decision of their case came from Allah. This verse was sent down to decide their case.

In this connection it should be kept in mind that the case of these three was different from the case of the seven mentioned in E.N. 99. They had inflicted the punishment on themselves before they were called to account for their fault.

(119) The three whose condition has been described in this verse, were Kaab bin Malik, Hilal bin Umayyah and Murarah bin Rubai. They were sincere believers, as has been stated above, and had made many sacrifices and given proofs of their sincerity before this. The last two had taken part in the battle of Badr also, and therefore their faith was above every kind of suspicion. Though Kaab had not taken part in the battle of Badr, he had accompanied the Prophet (peace be upon him) in every other expedition. But in spite of all these services, they were severely punished for the negligence they had shown on the critical occasion of the Tabuk expedition, when all the able-bodied Muslims were commanded to go forth to Jihad.
When the Prophet (peace be upon him) came back from Tabuk, he ordered the Muslims to break away completely from them; so much so that they should not even respond to their greetings. After forty days of this boycott their wives also were ordered to have nothing to do with them. In short, they were reduced at Al-Madinah to the same sad plight which has been described in this verse. At last, after a boycott of fifty days, this verse was sent down to announce their forgiveness.

The story of the above-mentioned boycott has been described in detail by Kaab bin Malik, who was one of the three. When he became old and blind, he himself told his story to his son, Abdullah, who used to accompany him everywhere. As this story is an excellent lesson for all, it is given below in Kaab's own words:

"When the Prophet (peace be upon him) urged upon the people to get ready for Jihad, I made up my mind to make preparations for this. But when I went home, I became negligent, saying to myself, "There is no hurry. When the time comes I will readily make preparations and start forthwith". In this way I went on putting off my preparations till the time came when the army was going to start on the expedition. As I had made no preparations for the journey, I said to myself, "It does not matter. I will be able to join the army in a couple of days during the journey". But again the same negligence prevented me from putting my intention into practice. At last no occasion was left for me to join the army. To add to my misery my conscience pricked me over and over again that the people with whom I had stayed behind in Al-Madinah were either

the hypocrites or those Muslims who were old or otherwise unfit for Jihad.

When the Prophet (peace be upon him) came back from Tabuk, he, as usual, said two rakats of prayer in the mosque. Then he sat there to meet the people. At first, the hypocrites, whose number was a little more than eighty, came to him and offered lame excuses on solemn oaths. The Prophet (peace be upon him) listened to the false story of each of them and accepted their apparent excuses and left the decision about their hearts to Allah, saying, “May Allah forgive you”. Then it was my turn to put forward my excuse. I went forward and uttered my salutations. He smiled and said, “Well, what kept you behind?” I hesitated for a moment. By God, I would have invented one excuse or the other to satisfy any man of the world, for I am well versed in the art of conversation. But here was the Prophet (peace be upon him) who was demanding an explanation from me. I believed that even if I succeeded in satisfying him by making a false excuse, Allah will inform him of the truth of the case and I shall again incur his displeasure. On the other hand, if I told the truth, I expected that Allah would forgive me, even though I were to incur his displeasure for the time being. So I replied, “I have no excuse for staying behind. I was in every way able to go forth (to Tabuk)”. At this the Prophet (peace be upon him) remarked, “This is the man who has told the truth”. Then turning to me, he said, “Go and wait till Allah decides your case”.

I rose from there and took my seat among the people of my own clan. They at once began to tease and reprove me because I had made no excuse. At this, I was tempted to go and make some false excuse. But when I came to know that there were also two good people (Murarah bin Rubai and Hilal bin Umayyah), who had told the same thing that I had, I felt satisfied and stuck to the truth.

After this the Prophet (peace be upon him) issued a general order that no one should have any kind of talk with us. The other two confined themselves to their houses but I used to go out of my house and say my prayers in congregation and walk through the bazaars. As nobody spoke to me, it appeared to me that I was a foreigner in some strange city where I had no acquaintances. When I attended the mosque, I would utter the usual salutations and wait in vain for a response from the Prophet (peace be upon him). I would turn stealthy looks at him to read his thoughts in regard to me, but he would turn his eyes away from me, though he had been looking at me while I was engaged in prayer. As this condition became intolerable for me, one day I went to see Abu Qatadah who was a

cousin of mine and a friend from childhood. I climbed over the wall of his garden and uttered my salutations, but even he did not make any response to it. Then I said, “O Abu Qatadah! I ask you to tell me on oath whether I love or do not love Allah and His Messenger”. But he remained silent. Again I repeated the question but he kept silent. I asked him on oath to answer my question. Then he merely replied, “Allah and His Messenger know best”. At this my eyes were filled with tears, and I came back.

Another incident happened during those days. Once I was passing through the bazaar, when a Syrian came to me and gave me a letter wrapped in silk. This was from the king of Ghassan and read like this: We have come to know that your leader is persecuting you these days. As you are not an ignoble person, we will not leave you to rot there. Therefore come to us and we will honor you (as you deserve). I said to myself, “Here is another hard trial for me”. Then I threw the letter into the burning oven.
The boycott continued for forty days, when a man brought this message from the Prophet (peace be upon him) that I should separate from my wife. I asked whether I should divorce her but was told that I should only separate from her. Accordingly I said to my wife, “Go to your parental home and wait till a decision comes from Allah.”

On the fiftieth day, when after the morning prayers, I was sitting in a state of utter despair on the top of my house, all of a sudden someone cried aloud, “O Kaab bin Malik! please accept my congratulations.” Hearing this, I fell prostrate to the ground before Allah, for I understood that the command of my forgiveness had come. After this, people began to pour in, each trying to forestall the other in congratulating me on the acceptance of my repentance. I rose and went directly to the Mosque. I noticed that the face of the Prophet (peace be upon him) was glowing with happiness and in response to my salutations, he said, “I congratulate you on this: it is the best day of your life.” I said, “Is this forgiveness from you or from Allah?” He replied, “It is from Allah.” Then he recited these verses (117-118). I asked, “O Messenger of Allah! Does my repentance require that I should give the whole of my property in charity?” He replied, “Keep a part of it, for it will be better for you.” Accordingly, I kept my property at Khaibar for myself and gave all the rest in charity. Then I solemnly pledged that I would stick to the truth throughout rest of my life, for Allah had forgiven me in return for the truth I had told. That is why I have never uttered a word against reality intentionally up to this time and hope and expect that Allah will protect me from lies in future as well.

This story contains many lessons, and every believer should impress these on his mind and heart.

The first and foremost lesson we learn from this story is that the matter of the conflict between Islam and kufr is so important and delicate that we should take the greatest possible care to be on our guard in regard to this. Not to mention the case of one who takes active part on the side of kufr, if a Muslim shows the least negligence even inadvertently in taking part on the side of Islam once in his life; and that, too, not with any evil intention, he is liable to lose all the lifelong services and devotions rendered by him in the cause of Islam. That was why such a severe action was taken even against those worthy people who had done great deeds of valor in the battles of Badr, Uhd, Ahzab and Hunain, and whose sincerity and faith were absolutely above suspicion.

The second thing, which is as important as the first, is that one should never consider lightly any negligence in the performance of a duty, for this often misleads one to commit an offense that is counted among heinous sins. The fact that one did not commit the offense with any evil intention cannot save one from punishment.

Lastly, this story presents the true spirit of the society that had been evolved out under the leadership of the Prophet (peace be upon him). On the one side, there were the hypocrites whose treacherous deeds were quite well known to all. They offered lame excuses which were accepted without demur for nothing better could be expected from them. On the other side, let us take the case of Kaab bin Malik, who was a tried believer, and whose sacrifices were above every kind of suspicion. He did not invent any false story to justify himself but confessed his fault quite plainly and clearly. But in contrast to the hypocrites, a severe chastisement was inflicted on him, not because there was any suspicion about his faith but because a sincere believer like him had behaved in a way in which only a hypocrite could behave. Thus the chastisement was meant to remind them: “You are the salt of the earth. But if you, too, become tasteless, from where will then salt be obtained?”

There is another noteworthy side of the matter. The part played by the leader and the follower and the Muslim society in this incident is unique. The leader inflicts the most severe punishment but with the feelings of affection and without any tinge of anger or hatred in it. It is like the punishment which a father gives to his son. It is always understood that the punishment is given for the good of

the son, who knows that as soon as he mends his ways, he will regain the fatherly love. And the follower sets an excellent example of obedience under very trying circumstances. He suffers hard from the severity of the chastisement but never thinks of rebelling against the leader because of any false personal or clannish pride; nay, he does not cherish in his heart any complaint against his beloved leader, but begins to love him even more than before. During this saddest period of his life the only thing he yearns for is a look of affection from his leader. For he is like a famine-stricken farmer whose only hope is the piece of cloud which he sees floating in the sky.

Now let us have a glimpse of the Muslim society, which displayed the greatest discipline and the highest moral spirit that had ever been shown by any society. No sooner does the leader order the boycott than the whole community becomes a stranger to the follower not only in public but also in private. So much so that his nearest relatives and closest friends do not even speak to him; nay, his own wife leaves him alone. He implores them on oath to tell him if they suspected his sincerity, but even his lifelong companions make a point-blank refusal, saying that he should ask Allah and His Messenger for that testimony. But in spite of the show of this strict discipline, the moral spirit of the community is so high and so pure that not a single person tries to take advantage of the position of the fallen brother by adding insult to his injury; nay, everyone feels sorry for his brother in disgrace, and is important to embrace him as soon as he is forgiven. That is why the people run in haste to tell him the good news.

The above is the model of the righteous community that the Quran aims.

This background makes it plain why Allah not only forgave them but also manifested His kindness; gentleness and compassion in His forgiveness to these people. It was because of their sincerity which they proved during the fifty days of their chastisement. Had they shown arrogance after the commission of their offense and retaliated by taking angry and hostile actions as does every self worshiper whose pride is wounded: had they behaved during their boycott in a manner as if they would break away from the community but never bow down before it: had they passed this period in spreading dissatisfaction in the community and gathering around them all the disgruntled people in order to organize a strong opposition against the leader, then they would have most certainly been expelled from the community, as if to say, “Go you now and

worship the idol of yourself, for henceforth you will never be given any opportunity for exerting to raise the word of Allah". But these three did not adopt this way though it was open to them. On the contrary, they took a different way, as has been seen, and proved that God worship had destroyed every idol that might have remained hidden in their hearts: that they had dedicated themselves entirely to the exertion in the Way of Allah: that while joining the Islamic community they had burnt their boats to make it impossible for themselves to go back anywhere: that they would put up with every kind of treatment but would remain in the community and die as a member of it and would scornfully reject any offer of an honorable place outside it; and would rather bear disgrace in it. That was why they were again taken in the community with the same honor as before. This is the explanation of the kind words of forgiveness: "Then He turned to them, that they might repent." In these concise words, the Quran has depicted the true picture of the matter. The Master had at first turned away His attention from His three servants but when He saw that they had not left His door but had remained there with broken hearts, He again turned to them in appreciation of their fidelity so as to bring them back into the fold.

يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيۡنَ اٰمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ وَ كُوۡنُوۡا مَعَ الصّٰدِقِيۡنَ ﴿۱۱۹﴾

(9-119) Believers! Have fear of Allah and stand with those that are truthful.

مَا كَانَ لِاَهۡلِ الۡمَدِيۡنَةِ وَمَنۡ حَوۡلَهُمۡ مِّنَ الۡاَعۡرَابِ اَنۡ يَّتَخَلَّفُوۡا عَنۡ رَّسُوۡلِ اللّٰهِ وَ لَا يَرۡغَبُوۡا بِاَنۡفُسِهِمۡ عَنۡ نَّفۡسِهٖ ؕ ذٰلِكَ بِاَنَّهُمۡ لَا يُصِيۡبُهُمۡ ظَمَاٌ وَّ لَا نَصَبٌ وَّ لَا مَخۡمَصَةٌ فِىۡ سَبِيۡلِ اللّٰهِ وَ لَا يَطَـئُوۡنَ مَوۡطِئًا يَّغِيۡظُ الۡكُفَّارَ وَ لَا يَنَالُوۡنَ مِنۡ عَدُوٍّ نَّيۡلًا اِلَّا كُتِبَ لَهُمۡ بِهٖ عَمَلٌ صَالِحٌ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَا يُضِيۡعُ اَجۡرَ الۡمُحۡسِنِيۡنَ ﴿۱۲۰﴾

(9-120) It did not behoove the people of Madinah and the bedouin Arabs around them that they should refrain from accompanying the Messenger of Allah and stay behind and prefer their own security to his. For whenever they suffer from thirst or weariness or hunger in the Way of Allah, and whenever they tread a place which enrages the unbelievers (whenever anything of this comes to pass), a good deed is recorded in their favor. Allah does not cause the work of the doers of good to go to waste.

وَ لَا يُنۡفِقُوۡنَ نَفَقَةً صَغِيۡرَةً وَّ لَا كَبِيۡرَةً وَّ لَا يَقۡطَعُوۡنَ وَادِيًا اِلَّا كُتِبَ لَهُمۡ لِيَجۡزِيَهُمُ اللّٰهُ اَحۡسَنَ مَا كَانُوۡا يَعۡمَلُوۡنَ ﴿۱۲۱﴾

(9-121) Likewise, each amount they spend, be it small or large, and each journey they undertake, shall be recorded in their

favor so that Allah may bestow upon them reward for their good deeds.

وَ مَا كَانَ ا ۡ مُ ۡ مِنُ وۡ نَ لِيَ ۡ فِرُوا كَآفَّ ً ۚ فَلَ ۡ لَا نَفَرَ ۡ مِ ۡ كُلِّ ۡ فِرۡقَ ٍ مِّنۡ ۡ مُ طَآئِفَ ٌ لِّيَتَفَقَّهُ ۡ ا فِى الدِّيۡ نِ وَ لِيُ ۡ نۡذِرُ ۡ ا قَوۡمَ ُ ۡ مۡ اِذَا رَجَعُ ۡ ا اِلَيۡ ِ ۡ مۡ لَعَلَّ ُ ۡ مۡ يَ ۡ ذَرُوۡنَ ﴿۱۲۲﴾

(9-122) It was not necessary for the believers to go forth all together (to receive religious instruction), but why did not a party of them go forth that they may grow in religious understanding, and that they may warn their people when they return to them, so that they may avoid (erroneous attitudes)? (120)

(120) In order to comprehend the meaning of this verse, Ayat 97 with which it is connected, should be kept in view:

These Bedouins are most stubborn in unbelief and hypocrisy, and, in all probability, will remain ignorant of the laws of the way which Allah has sent down to His Messenger.

In Ayat 97, the Quran merely diagnosed the disease and pointed out its symptoms. The Bedouins were suffering from the disease of hypocrisy because of their ignorance of the laws of the Way of Allah. This was so because they had not had any connections with the center of that knowledge. Here in this concluding portion of the Surah, the remedy of that disease has been prescribed so that they should have an understanding of Islam and its implications. It is not necessary that for this purpose all of them should leave their homes and come to Al-Madinah to learn that knowledge, but some of them should come from each habitation, clan and region to the centers of the knowledge (Al-Madinah, Makkah and the like) and understand Islam. Then they should go back to their own habitations and create its understanding among the common people.

This was a very important instruction that was given at the opportune moment to strengthen the Islamic movement. For, at that time, the people were entering into the fold of Islam in large numbers without its proper understanding. Obviously, this instruction was not needed in the initial stages of the movement, for at that time everyone who embraced Islam did so with its full understanding. No one would think of becoming a Muslim without this as this was an invitation to persecution. When the movement became successful and won power in the land, the clans and the habitations began to enter en bloc into the fold of Islam. Naturally very few of them understood the full implications of the faith before accepting it, but the majority of them were being carried into the

fold, as it were, by the strong current that had been generated by the movement. Outwardly this immense increase in numbers appeared to be a source of strength to Islam, but in reality such people as had no true understanding of Islam and were, therefore, not prepared to fulfill its moral obligations, were not only useless for the Islamic system but were actually harmful to it. This side of the matter became quite apparent during the preparations for the Tabuk expedition. That is why Allah sent down the instruction that necessary steps should be taken for the integration of the Islamic community so that it may keep pace with the immense increase in its number. Therefore some people should be brought out from every habitation and taught and trained in the requirements of Islam and these in their turn should teach and train their own people so that the whole Muslim population should understand Islam and obtain the knowledge of the limits prescribed by Allah. In this connection, it should also be clearly understood that the command about mass education given in this verse is not merely about literacy but it had the definite aim of imparting the understanding of the way of Islam among the masses and enabling them to refrain from un-Islamic ways. This is the real and permanent aim of education that has been set before the Muslims by Allah himself. Therefore every system of their education shall be judged by this criterion and shall be regarded Islamic only to the extent it fulfills this aim. It does not, however, mean that Islam is against the spreading of literacy and teaching of the purely mundane subjects to the masses, but it simply means that the primary aim of the Islamic education should be the achievement of the objective which has been mentioned above in italics. Without this, it does not consider any education to be education at all, even if it were to produce Einsteins and Freuds of the age.

It will be worthwhile to consider the true significance of the words used in the context, for they created a strange misunderstanding among the people of the later period, and produced lasting poisonous effects on the religious education of the Muslims, nay, on their whole religious life in general. It is obvious that Allah used these words in order to lay down the objective of education before the Muslims, which was this: to understand the Islamic way of life and have an insight into its system: to be familiar with its true nature and spirit so as to be able to judge and differentiate between the Islamic and the un-Islamic ways of thought and conduct in every aspect of life. But later on when the knowledge of the Muslim law was given the technical name of Fiqh, it gradually developed into the science of the details of external form (as opposed to the spiritual aspect of the Islamic law). As the word Fiqh is of the same root as used in this verse, a misunderstanding was created that this

command of the Quran was about acquiring the knowledge of Fiqh in the above-mentioned sense. It is true that this knowledge is of great importance in the Islamic system of life, but it is not all that is required by the Quran but only a part of the objective. It is not possible to recount here all the damages that the Muslim community has suffered because of this misunderstanding, but suffice it to say that this is the thing, which is responsible for reducing the religious education of the Muslims to the knowledge and interpretation of the external form of Islam without paying any attention to the spirit of Islam. This inevitably resulted in making lifeless formalism the ultimate goal of the life of the Muslims.

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا قَاتِلُوا الَّذِيْنَ يَلُوْنَكُمْ مِّنَ الْكُفَّارِ وَلْيَجِدُوْا فِيْكُمْ غِلْظَةً ۭ وَاعْلَمُوْٓا اَنَّ اللّٰهَ مَعَ الْمُتَّقِيْنَ ١٢٣

(9-123) Believers! Fight against the unbelievers who live around you; (121) and let them find in you sternness. (122) Know that Allah is with the God-fearing. (123)

(121) From the apparent wording of this verse, it may be inferred that only those Muslims have at first been held responsible to fight with those enemies of Islam who live near their territory. But if we read this verse along with the succeeding passage, it becomes clear that here disbelievers who are near you refers to those hypocrites who were doing great harm to the Islamic society by mixing up with the sincere Muslims. This very thing was stated in Ayat 73 at the beginning of this discourse. The command has been repeated at its end in order to impress on the Muslims the importance of the matter and to urge them to do Jihad and crush these internal enemies, without paying the least regard to the racial, family and social relations that had been proving a binding force with them. The only difference between the two commands is that in Ayat 73, the Muslims were asked to do Jihad with them, while in this verse stronger words “fight those” have been used, which were meant to impress on them that they should crush the hypocrites thoroughly and completely. Another difference in the wordings is that in Ayat 73, two different words, “disbelievers and hypocrites” have been used, while in this verse only one word, “disbelievers” has been used so that the hypocrites should forfeit all their claims as Muslims. For there was room for this concession in the word hypocrite.

(122) This is meant to impress that they should not, in future, show the lenient treatment they had been meting out to them up to that time. This has already been commanded in Ayat 73 as be firm and stern with them.

(123) This warning has two-fold meanings and both are implied here. First, If you show any kind of leniency towards them because of your personal or family or economic connections with them, you should know that such a thing shall be against the fear of God. For the fear of God and friendly relations with the enemies of Allah are contradictory things. Therefore, you should give these up if you desire to obtain Allah's help. Secondly, You should scrupulously observe the moral and humane limits in doing Jihad, and in fighting against them. For you should always keep yourselves within the prescribed limits in everything. If you transgress these in any way, you should know that Allah will forsake you for He helps only those who are Godfearing.

وَ اِذَا مَا اُنۡزِلَتۡ سُوۡرَۃٌ فَمِنۡہُمۡ مَّنۡ یَّقُوۡلُ اَیُّکُمۡ زَادَتۡہُ ہٰذِۡ اِیۡمَانًا ۚ فَاَمَّا الَّذِیۡنَ اٰمَنُوۡا فَزَادَتۡہُمۡ اِیۡمَانًا وَّ ہُمۡ یَسۡتَبۡشِرُوۡنَ ﴿۱۲۴﴾

(9-124) And whenever a new surah is revealed some of the hypocrites ask the believers (in jest): "Whose faith has increased because of this?" As for those who believe, it will certainly increase their faith, and they are joyful over that.

وَ اَمَّا الَّذِیۡنَ فِیۡ قُلُوۡبِہِمۡ مَّرَضٌ فَزَادَتۡہُمۡ رِجۡسًا اِلٰی رِجۡسِہِمۡ وَ مَاتُوۡا وَ ہُمۡ کٰفِرُوۡنَ ﴿۱۲۵﴾

(9-125) But those whose hearts are affected with the disease (of hypocrisy), every new surah added a fresh abomination to their abomination. (124) They remained unbelievers till their death.

(124) As regards the increase and decrease in faith, disbelief and hypocrisy, please refer to E.N.2 of Surah Al-Anfal.

اَوَ لَا یَرَوۡنَ اَنَّہُمۡ یُفۡتَنُوۡنَ فِیۡ کُلِّ عَامٍ مَّرَّۃً اَوۡ مَرَّتَیۡنِ ثُمَّ لَا یَتُوۡبُوۡنَ وَ لَا ہُمۡ یَذَّکَّرُوۡنَ ﴿۱۲۶﴾

(9-126) Do they not see that they are tried every year once or twice? (125) Yet they neither repent nor take heed.

(125) That is, during the course of every year such circumstances are created as put to test once or twice their claim to the faith, and these disclose that their profession of Islam was like a counterfeit coin. For instance, some time their faith is tested by: (a) A commandment of the Quran which lays some new restriction on their lust or by; (b) A demand of the faith that hits hard at their self interests or by; (c) an internal dispute which discloses their

preference for worldly interests and for their personal, family and clannish relations to Allah, His Messenger and the faith or by; (d) A war that requires the sacrifice of their lives, wealth, time and energies. All these tests help bring to the open that filth of hypocrisy that lay hidden in their hearts under the garb of the profession of Islam. Besides, these things increase that filth which had already gathered in their hearts because of their deviations from the implications of the faith.

وَ اِذَا مَا اُ نۡزِلَتۡ سُوۡرَۃٌ نَّظَرَ بَعۡضُہُمۡ اِلٰی بَعۡضٍ ؕ ہَلۡ یَرٰىکُمۡ مِّنۡ اَحَدٍ ثُمَّ انۡصَرَفُوۡا ؕ صَرَفَ اللّٰہُ قُلُوۡبَہُمۡ بِاَنَّہُمۡ قَوۡمٌ لَّا یَفۡقَہُوۡنَ ﴿۱۲۷﴾

(9-127) And whenever a surah is revealed, they glance at each other as though saying: "Is anyone watching?" Then they slip away. (126) Allah has turned away their hearts for they are a people who are bereft of understanding. (127)

(126) This happened when the hypocrites had to attend a meeting that was specially held for the recital of some new Surah. The Prophet (peace be upon him) used to recite as an address every new Surah before the assembly. The true believers would listen to it very attentively and respectfully. But the hypocrites, who had to attend the meeting to show that they were Muslims, would sit listlessly in the meeting for they had no interest in the recital. But when they would be assured that their attendance had been marked, they would look for an opportune moment to slip away without being seen and noticed.

(127) Allah has turned away their hearts from the Quran, because they do not understand that it is in their own interest to listen to the Quran and to act upon its teachings. These foolish people do not realize that by ignoring the Quran and the Prophet (peace be upon him), they in fact deprive themselves of a great blessing. As they are deeply engaged in their own narrow interests, they do not see that the great knowledge of the Quran and the right guidance of the Prophet (peace be upon him) has the potentiality of making them the leaders of this world, and of bringing salvation to them in the next world. As a result of their folly and neglect of the great blessing, Allah has, in accordance with His law, deprived them of the capacity of making use of this blessing and turned away their hearts from it. That is why these unfortunate, people do not even feel the great loss they are suffering, while the blessed people are taking full advantage of this great fountainhead of power and strength and are preparing themselves for achieving the greatest success that human beings could ever achieve

لَقَدْ جَآءَكُمْ رَسُوْلٌ مِّنْ اَنْفُسِكُمْ عَزِيْزٌ عَلَيْهِ مَا عَنِتُّمْ حَرِيْصٌ عَلَيْكُمْ بِالْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ رَءُوْفٌ رَّحِيْمٌ ﴿١٢٨﴾

(9-128) There has come to you a Messenger of Allah from among yourselves, who is distressed by the losses you sustain, who is ardently desirous of your welfare and is tender and merciful to those that believe.

فَاِ تَوَلَّ ا فَقُ سحَبِىَ اللّٗ ۞ لَا اِلٰ اِلَّا ٰوَ ۡ عَلَيۡ تَوَكَّلۡتُ وَ ُ وَ رَبُّ ا وَشِ
ا لۡعَظِيمِ ١٢٩ ٪

(9:129) Yet, if they should turn away, then tell them: "Allah is sufficient for me; there is no god but He. In Him I have put my trust. He is the Lord of the Mighty Throne."